



ALL 1991, Vol. 2, No. 3 ©The Mailboat, P.O. Box 3, Harkers Island, NC 28531



Bogue Banks fishing crew 1950s (Photo by Jerry Schumacher)

Fall Fishing

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Bow Line

What a fall this has been! For that matter, what a year!

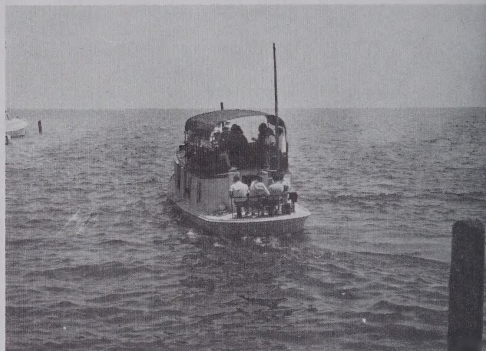
It seems like last week when we were rounding Christmas and looking at 1991 ahead of us. Now its mid-November and Christmas again, and so much left on the "List of Things To Do." Though we have not stopped to "catch our breath" all year long, I believe we need at least a few more months before Christmas holidays and its time for a new year to begin. But the weeks are racing by, and so its time to look back at what we've done, get busy doing what we can, and begin now making plans for 1992.

Since the summer issue **The Mailboat** has been even busier than ever. September brought many events including the NC Wildlife & Sportsman's Show in New Bern, the Waterfowl Festival in Currituck, a genealogy workshop at the County Museum, and a wonderful day at Ocracoke meeting with the Friends of Portsmouth Island.

That day was one of the "Top 10 Days of the Year" for sure. That morning when we boarded the Cedar Island ferry at 7 am I cannot tell you how beautiful it was. As the sun crawled up from behind Core Banks I couldn't imagine being anywhere else. We all talked about how fortunate we were just to have the opportunity to be in such a place. And the day got even better as we went along ... The meeting was great (real "laid-back," friendly, optimistic, enthusiastic), the food delicious (fresh fish and cornbread), and the company unsurpassed (Portsmouth natives, Ocracokers, Core Sounders, Down East lovers). From the Island Inn we moved to Howard Street where Larry Williams (President of the Ocracoke Preservation Society and Ocracoke native) told us tales and stories that most of us had never heard before. We tiptoed through cemeteries and front yards, wondering what it might have been like when the folks we were talking about were alive. So much history ...

The rest of the day was spent visiting, shopping at the auction, and just enjoying the weather. My group left (reluctantly) on the last ferry at 8:30 that night. When we cleared Silver Lake and turned toward Cedar Island a big harvest moon came from behind those same sand banks the sun had sneaked across earlier that day. What a sight! With only a few cars on the ferry, we walked around and enjoyed the cool Pamlico Sound breeze, counted stars, and treasured every minute. It doesn't get any better than that!

I believe the Lord gave us that day to give us strength for the next weekend. The 1991 Seafood Festival was a washout! If you were not there, be glad. If you were, be happy we did not drown. It has never rained and blown any harder. I believe Skip (the local weatherman) missed his chance to predict a "real" hurricane! The months of planning and work we had put into organizing "Coastal Yesterday" was never given a chance to surface. Discouraged we were, until some of our most faithful subscribers weathered the storm to come and visit. Mr. Donnelly from Tennessee, David Utley from New York, and others from across the state literally "waded" to get to us just to say hello. You-folks will never know what that meant! We'll be there again next year though, hopefully with sunny skies and light breezes, and it will have been worth the wait.



The "Aleta" - leaving Atlantic, 1930s (Photo courtesy Daisy Banks)



Post Office dock - Harkers Island (Photo courtesy Madge Guthrie)

Special Request

Dear Mailboat,

I am researching the family of James and Magdelene Bell ca 1740 in the White Oak River area, Carteret and Onslow County.

Please have anyone with genealogical information on this family contact me.

*William Ball
P O Box 3464
Morehead City, NC 28557*

The Fishing Crews of Bogue Banks

"That I have Known or Heard Tell of" Cap'n Jim

Night had fallen when I finally heard Daddy come in. "They're getting ready," he said. "It's time to go." My mother and I put on our jackets, grabbed our flashlights, and headed out the front door of the hotel to the ocean beach. As we walked towards the Main Beach to the eastward, I could see the glow of gas lanterns in the dark of the night. Then suddenly we were among them, the men of the first fishing crew I ever remember on Bogue Banks, a crowd from the Promise' Land in Morehead. They were getting ready to "haul" the net they had set earlier in the day. The catch of the haul was only fair, but I have never forgotten it, since it was my very first experience of this kind. I also remember that this crew was unique among all those of our Banks land in a very peculiar way. They had two captains! Lon Lewis and Harry Bell were what would today be called co-captains of the crew. The place was Atlantic Beach on Bogue Banks. The year was 1939.

This was my introduction to the fishing crews of Bogue Banks. Some of these crews fished two seasonal fisheries, the fall fishery on jumping mullets and spots along with a sprinkling of bluefish, speckled trout, pompano, spanish mackerel, puppy drum, hogfish, croaker, and sea mullet, and a spring fishery on bluefish. I will not say anything about the spring fishery, since it was small and I know little about it.

The Fall Fishery

The fall fishery of Bogue Banks depended on the schools of fish that migrated out of Beaufort Inlet in the fall of the year after the "mullet blows," or cold fronts came through. These blows occurred quite frequently, beginning as early as the middle of August and lasting until Thanksgiving. When the fish sensed the water cooling, schooled up, and headed out the inlet in their annual fall migration, they usually hugged the shoreline as they rounded Fort Macon Point. So, the crew which took up the first position to the westward of the inlet usually had the first chance of a good catch, but not always. One of the biggest catches of all time along the Banks (over 160,000 pounds of spot in one haul) occurred way up the Banks from the inlet, and all the crews stood a good chance of a fair catch as long as they were not too bunched up.

There have probably been fishing crews along the ocean side of Bogue Banks since the first Cape Bankers came over in the early 1800's, but their numbers always remained limited. Since the weather was frequently bad when fishing was good, the catch could not usually be loaded on boats in the ocean because it was too rough. So, all of the fish had to be hauled over the "paths" and across the Banks to the Sound, usually in baskets on the backs of the crew members. Here they were loaded on small boats and carried to the Mainland for processing and sale. Beach fishing was hard work and was limited by the dif-

ficulty of getting the catch to market. In 1928 the bridge came to Bogue Banks, and in my opinion initiated the "era of the Crews" on Bogue Banks. The bridge had hardly opened, however, when the Depression came along and put the skids on any innovations in the fishery. Then came World War II which further stifled development for the duration. But at last, in the fall of 1945, with the war over and things beginning to boom, the fall fishery of Bogue Banks finally came into its own.

Trucks were the key to the fishery. With trucks to haul not only the fish to market, but also the boats, nets, and crews anywhere on the beach they needed to go, fishing on the beach took on a new life and became a large industry. Many crews came to occupy "fisheries" on the Banks, and fall fishing became a mainstay for many men from four principal communities, Salter Path on the Banks, and Broad Creek, Gales Creek, and parts of Morehead on the Mainland. I remember as many as 8 crews at one time on the 25 mile stretch of Bogue Banks. By the time I left for college in 1952, the Era of the Crews as it its peak.

The Average Crew

All of the crews usually had several things in common. The average crew fished for a dealer who owned a fishhouse on the Mainland. The dealer secured the place to fish called a "fishery" and provided a camp to house the men. The camp was a wooden frame structure right next to the ocean that provided sleeping, cooking, and eating quarters for the crew members. Each crew usually had one or two cooks who shared in the profits of the crew as full time members. A crew consisted of 15 to 25 men and varied in size according to how many showed up each week. They had at least one, but more often two, boats called dories, which looked much like the whale boats their ancestors had used to the Cape, except that the sterns were not as pointed so as to allow space for large nets on the stern. Several set nets (called gill nets today) and at least one or two "strike-away nets" (seines) were kept on hand. And of course each crew had at least one truck, the workhorse of the beach. There was no other mechanized equipment on the beach until the advent of farm tractors in the late 1950's.

The crews had a set procedure which they followed each year. During the summer the captains and the dealers got together and made their arrangements for the coming season. Some captains fished for the same dealer year after year, for example Duffy Guthrie always fished for Otis Purifoy for as long as I can remember. The dealers secured their fishery for the year from whoever claimed to own the land adjacent to the beach on which they fished. Frequently this arrangement lasted for many years. Finally the captains got the camp and gear ready and lined up the men and cooks for the ability to proper-

ly foot-up a net, and the captains tried to secure men with the wide variety of talents needed for the smooth operation of the crew. When the first big "blow" of the season occurred, the captains got word to their crew members and the truck was dispatched to pick them up. Then the real season began.

The first big business of the new season was to "set the net" (not "make a set," which is a different operation). A "set net," frequently 1000 yards or more long, was put out from the beach into the ocean from a dory in a large curving arc resembling a quarter circle, with the open interior portion facing Beaufort Inlet to the eastward. This operation formed a pocket along the shore into which the fish would swim and mill about rather than swim around the open end. This is the net called a "stop net" today by those who were not there and don't know its correct name. The net was placed on the stern of the boat, and the boat was rowed out to sea by three to five men with the captain in the stern playing out the net. There was no steersman, since the net occupied the space in the stern where the steering oar had traditionally been. The vessel was usually steered by having one more man on the side of the boat away from the pocket formed by the net. The extra oar on the outer side was sufficient to cause the boat to follow the correct arc during the setting operation. When the outer end of the net was reached, an anchor was placed on the bottom to hold the net in position, and a "trip line" was tied to the bottom part of the anchor and run ashore and secured. In case the weather turned real bad before the net was hauled back in, the anchor and net could be pulled ashore by the trip line without having to send out a boat, and the net could be saved.

Unless the weather or time of day dictated otherwise, the net was hauled at high water (called high tide by folks from inland). The haul was made at that time, so that if the net was so full of fish it couldn't be pulled all the way up on the beach, then when the tide fell, both the net and its catch would be left high and dry on the beach. The fish could then be removed and loaded without having to dip them out of the ocean. When the time to haul arrived, the boat was dispatched to the offshore end of the net where the anchor was removed and the end of the set net tied to a new net in the boat. The boat was then rowed towards shore with the new net playing out behind to close the pocket formed by the set net. Thus a complete half circle was made by the two nets with the beach closing the two shore ends and completing the enclosure. Then the back-breaking job of pulling in the net by hand began. About 200 yards of the west portion of the net was usually pulled in first and then both ends were pulled in together unless the weather, tide, or condition of the nets dictated otherwise. Most of the crew would grasp the lead line while a few would grab the cork line and begin pulling the huge nets ashore. As the nets came in, the men laid down the portion they had pulled ashore, walked back down to the water's edge, grabbed the line again, and pulled in another portion. When the lead lines touched bottom at the water's edge were key spots as the net came ashore. If these lines were pulled too far off the bottom, the fish could all swim out from under the net. So, specially talented men would be

given the job of "footing-up" each lead line. In footing-up, not only did you have to hold the lead line down on the bottom with your foot, but at the same time you had to let it slip freely underneath as it was pulled ashore. While doing all these gyrations you also had to keep moving towards the other end of the net as the two ends came together. You could not just get anybody off the street to foot-up a net. It required a talented individual. As the pocket became very small and the fish finally felt trapped, the jumping mullets would begin jumping over to freedom, and before the cork line could be held high enough, many of them would usually make good their escape. If there were just a few fish, the cork and lead lines would often be brought together with the catch enclosed in a pocket of net bunt and the whole net pulled ashore. If the net contained a tremendous school, then it was not pulled all the way in. Instead, the strike-away net was used to take small portions of the school ashore for harvest while retaining most of the school within the pocket of big net. The fish were then loaded by hand into the truck, which was driven down on the beach beside the net, and carried to the mainland for processing.

If a school of fish suddenly appeared when a net was not set or could not be readily hauled, the crew would "strike-away" around the school with the "strike-away" net in the "strike-away" boat. To "strike-away" meant to put the net out around a school of fish in a half circle very quickly. The difference between "making a set" and "striking-away" is that in "making a set" the net is placed around the fish in a complete circle, with the catch being made by gilling the fish in the net or by dipping or pumping them out of the pocket, while in "striking-away" the net is put out in only a half-circle and is then pulled up on the beach with the fish in it. Sometimes they would load the strike-away boat and net on the truck along with the crew members and ride up and down the beach looking for schools of fish. The coming of the schools was not reliable, depending as it did on the weather and the direction of the wind. During slack periods they would mend the net and tend to other chores. If the weather got too pretty, they would usually go home till the next blow. Fishing on the ocean beach was often a matter of feast or famine. At the end of each week the profits were split up on the basis of shares. The dealer paid the crew for the fish by the pound according to the species composition of the catch and the market prices when they were caught. From this gross income was subtracted the operating expenses, such as the grub bill, the gas bill, etc. Then the net profit was apportioned among the crew members and others on the basis of shares. Usually each crew member and each cook got one share. Then the captain got an extra share; also, the owner of the truck, boat and each net each got a share. The number of shares was added up, and the net profit divided by the total number of shares to give the amount each share earned for the week.

Some Individual Crews

The earliest crew I ever heard tell of was one that my grandfather, "Little Jim" Hancock, had to Hoopole Creek

Beach Seine Fishery - 1945

Josiah W. Bailey, II

Early in September, 1945, I joined a beach-seine crew of Salter Pathers and Broad Creekers. Japan had just surrendered. World II finally was over. I had been discharged earlier from military service for medical reasons. The others in the crew were either exempt due to their being too old for the military or for physical or mental impairment of some sort. As far as I know, none had been judged criminally insane, though some, certainly, had potential. Our ages ranged from 18 to 70 (or more). I was twenty-two.

Gasoline still was rationed. Therefore, we normally did not use motor vehicles to move the great seines about the beach. We "toted" them from wherever they were hauled ashore to wherever they were to be reset. These places were, according to some divine law, always inhumanely far apart.

There was a technique to this; two men stood abreast of one another, each with the end of a twelve foot ash oar across his shoulders. Others flung the cotton twine net, heavy with water and sand, onto the oar between them. The load was gauged by watching the stronger man's knees. When they buckled ("nipped"), another pair of oar bearers stepped up ahead of the just loaded pair to be similarly loaded. It took four to five oars to "tote" the seine to the place for next "setting." This was usually a mile to two miles through soft beach sand. Not easy "toting."

My first day, I was introduced to this practice. I was placed on the down-slope end of the first pair of oars. They said the beach was harder closer to the water, and that would make it easier for me, being I was new to this work. They wanted to "break me in" gently, you know. No one thought to point out that the slope of the beach tended to transfer the load unevenly toward the lower end of the oar.

Opposite me was "Roosevelt" (named for Theodore Roosevelt). He was huge, about six, six---bare-footed---weighed, at least three hundred pounds. He was thirty-three years old, bear bellied, and tough as a coon. He was, however, good natured when sober. Fortunately, he stayed sober during daylight, which was when we were actively engaged in fishing.

Anyway, the slope of the beach and Roosevelt's great height, compared to my five foot, nine inches, transferred most of the seine's weight to my end of the oar. They kept piling on the seine. My knees "nipped" more than once, but I managed to straighten them up. They kept piling on net, waiting for Roosevelt's to "nip." They never did. The dory captain, whose oar was on our shoulders, finally got concerned not to break it, and they started loading another pair. Seemed like a good idea to me, even though I hadn't any interest in the oar.

When it was all loaded, we commenced walking to the west-ard. We were just west of Atlantic Beach (maybe a mile). We "toted" long enough to have fetched Bogue Inlet. It probably wasn't quite that far, but I didn't protest when the order came to "set 'er down."

Roosevelt could have "toted" that damn net clean to Wilmington by himself, if he'd wanted to.

I realized later I'd been through some kind of "right of passage." Had I not held up under that punishing load, don't know as I'd have been allowed to continue in the crew. Apparently, I passed; I was accepted with friendship and affection which I value yet, fifty years later.

They no longer paired me up with giants and local "strong men," but with men of my own size. I noticed they also loaded the net not in the center of the oar but a little closer to the man on the higher end of the oar, thus equalizing the load between us. They simply treated me, a stranger, as one of themselves. I didn't find any reason to complain of this. My knees never "nipped" again.

The seine was actually comprised of two units. One was the main net somewhat shy of a half mile long; the other was the "strike-away net." It was about a quarter mile. Both nets would "stand and fish" in twenty feet of water. That takes a lot of "bunt." ("Bunt" is the netting, as distinct from the staffs, rope, floats, and weights that comprise a net.)

In 1945, the "bunt" was cotton, the rope, manilla, the floats were Portuguese cork. All these items are "plastic" now. Plastic is a lot lighter - doesn't absorb water. Funny, now that they have lighter loads, they use tractors where we used manpower. Ain't that "out o' order"?

The main net was run out through the surf from a dory. The first five hundred yards were set approximately perpendicular to the beach. There, an anchor was set and the remaining two hundred and fifty yards was set at a forty-five degree angle to the inshore part. The net was also anchored at the seaward end. When setting off Atlantic Beach, NC, the first part runs south, the off-shore end runs southeast.

Once set, the main net remained in the sea for about twelve hours unless it filled with fish sooner, which was unusual. The usual routine was to haul just at first light in the morning, re-set and fish again just before sundown. The net was kept "fishing" constantly, weather permitting, except when it was being hauled, cleared of fish, and mended.

Jumping mullet, spot, speckled trout, red drum (i.e. channel bass), pompano, butterfish, sea catfish, sting rays, and skates, when migrating along the beach, tend to be stopped by and to mill-around behind these long nets stretching far offshore.

The seine mesh is purposely too small to gill these fish. Gill nets are too selective as to size and species for this kind of catch-all seining.

To fish the net, the dory crew launched their boat through the surf with the "strike-away" net flaked in the stern. First they released the main net from the "elbow" anchor. Next they went to the net's off-shore end, released the anchor there and attached the "strike-away" net. Then they rowed for shore on an arcking course, paying out the "strike-away" net as they

went. Once the "strike-away" net was all payed out, a long line (the "warp") was rowed ashore and turned over to the beachhands whose job it was to haul that end of the hole seine shoreward as quickly as possible.

Meanwhile half the beach crew was set to haul on the other end of the net. The idea was to get the "strike-away" end of the net ashore as soon as possible but before taking a strain on the other end. If the main net were hauled before the "strike-away" end got ashore, fish stopped in their southward migration by the main net, sensing the net's movement, could turn-about and escape around the inshore end of the "strike-away" net before it was securely ashore. Mullet and speckled trout were particularly likely to do this.

My daily routine became: wake up about 4:00 AM, go to the beach with my neighbor, who had gotten me my chance with the beach crew, haul my share of the 6/10ths mile net, tote the damn thing back to the setting point, then load such catch as we had landed onto the fish dealer's truck. We usually got done about 10:00 AM and spent the rest of the day mending net, hanging new net, sleeping, loafing, whatever.

We couldn't leave the beach without the beach captain's permission. There was the chance a school of mullets might fill the net before normal hauling time or the weather might change. In either case, we had to be ready to haul. In the normal course, the big seine was hauled again about 4:00 PM. It would be 8:30 PM before we got it re-set, and any fish loaded for the dealer. I'd get home about 9:00 PM, zombie tired.

For the first three weeks of September, my single share worked out to be some twenty-few dollars. I had a twenty year old wife and two children, one just two years old, the other about nine months. My wife got real discouraged when I handed over my share. Her folks had never lived from the water.

Ever since, it's been real hard to make her believe that anything I do makes much sense. But if making sense had been a high priority with me, we wouldn't have been married with two little children when we were ages twenty and twenty-two respectively. None of the four of us had either a college degree, or an endowed income.

I became convinced then that it would be a good idea if all children were born twenty-one years old with a college degree, and a generous endowment. Would surely have solved a lot of our early "marital" problems.

I was planning to return to college with the help of the "GI Bill of Rights" in November. In those days employers were peculiar about hiring folks who would be available for only two months. There was no other work available until I was to go back to school, so I continued to fish.

Part II

Shortly after we commenced fishing on the beach, the crew built a cook shack in the edge of the dunes. Some of the Salter Path wives and daughters had engaged to cook breakfasts and dinners (mid-day meal) for us. Soon as the shack was built, we dug a well in a low place behind the first row of dunes. It was about thirty yards from the cook-house. At about 7 ft. we got fresh water. The well point was inserted on a short length of pipe; the whole was filled and a pitcher pump head affixed to the

top of the pipe. A fish cleaning and dish washing table was built around the pump. We had fresh water for the entire fishing season.

The critical trick in installing these beach wells is to place the pump point at precisely the right level to pick up fresh water at all stages of the tide. Below a certain level, the water is salt. As the tide rises, the fresh water, being lighter than sea water, rises on top of the sea water. If the pump point is too deep, it will pick up salt water at high tide, while sucking fresh water fine at low tide.

The fresh water is rainwater that has filtered down to the sea water that underlies all of the NC sand banks.

In a manner of speaking, the banks are simply shoals immersed in the ocean. Sand shoals shift according to weather and sea conditions. I have seen sensitive current meters inserted into wells such as our fishing crew's.

On Atlantic Beach, when the wind is strong to the east'ard, the current underlying the sand flows westward. Conversely when the wind is to the west'ard, the current flows to the east. Of course, the "banks" are unstable.

The fishermen's cook-house was a simple, inexpensive affair, easily disassembled and moved. If lost to storm, it was no calamity. It was suitable for its use and location.

I wonder about those who have built expensive, pretentious structures on shoals in the sea. A Japanese proverb holds: "knowledge without wisdom is a load of books on the back of a jackass." Maybe that explains some of what I see on the "banks" today.

Meat still was rationed, so was sugar and some other commodities. The wartime fishing crews were temporary associations, of course, and had no ration coupons issued to them as entities. It made little difference. The Salter Path ladies who cooked for us made only one concession to "wartime measures." They managed to feed our crew of twenty-five, including themselves, very well, indeed. Our concession was that we used molasses instead of sugar in our coffee. Not as good as sugar, but not bad either. The coffee was strong enough to kill---the molasses taste---anyway.

Corn meal was plentiful, as was flour. Locally raised pigs provided lard and side meat (streak o' lean, streak o' fat"). No ration coupons were involved as the locally produced meat never appeared in the usual channels of commerce. The local "black market" was very efficient as far as we were concerned. If we weren't caught, it was "legal."

The main virtue of rationing and price controls is that they imbue such moral principles. The whole generation learned.

We ate lots of fried corn-bread soaked in molasses. There was no shortage of chickens and eggs, though we used few as long as fish were available. We provided our own fish even in the early September period when we weren't catching much for the market.

There were spots, bluefish, and speckled trout for breakfast. Once we caught five thousand pounds of "hand sized" butterfish and had some of them for breakfast and again for dinner. Another time we caught enough Pompano for dinner. The cooks fixed a fish stew with dumplings.

The Harkers Island Fishermen

David Yeomans

After everyone had left Diamond City and Shackleford Banks around 1900 and moved to Harkers Island the fishing crews had to get re-established. Some of the crews went over to Cape Lookout and built small shanties, one for sleeping and cooking and one for storing the fish. Mullet fishing was the only type of fishing done then because there was no refrigeration for other type of fish. The mullets were split, washed and salted in barrels.

Crews were organized by family, usually including the father as the leader and his sons (sometimes nephews, other close kin, or neighbors) as the crew. Crews were referred to by the leader's (father's) name.

The Crews at Cape Lookout

John Rose Crew (Cape Hills) - Thomas, George, Joey, Daniel and John William

Eugene Yeomans Crew (Hook of Cape) - Walter, Dan, Luther, Fernie and Kendall

Sam E. Willis Crew - Kelly, Sammie, Luther, Ira and Eddie

George Rose Crew - Telford, Ed, Dallas, and Cletus

Alfonso Guthrie Crew - Allen, Billie, and Louie; Henry Guthrie and his boys, Johnnie, David and Odell

The Crews at Shackleford Banks

Martin Guthrie Crew - Clayton and Ernest

Calvin F. Willis Crew - Rennie, Dannie (Dankie) and Calvin

Charlie Hancock Crew - Louie, Charlie William, Sterling, Louie Hallis, Creston (Sno' Ball), and Ralph

Tom Martin Guthrie Crew - Vannie and Willie; Hedrick Moore and his boys, Allen, Aaron, Tyre, and Alfred

Joe Lewis Crew (Mullet Pond) - Fred, Charlie and Joe Lane

Tyre Moore Crew - Abram, Irvin, Eugene, George and Hedrick of Marshallberg

These crews were all engaged in mullet fishing during the fall. The mullet would go out of the northern inlets during the fall and come around Cape Point and go into the Hook of the Cape and along Shackleford Banks where the fishermen would be waiting for them.

The mullet fishermen used seines approximately 150 to 2009 yards long, rolled off the pilot boat. Catching the mullet was the easiest part, then the work had just begun. Cleaning the mullet, washing and salting them in barrels would go on for days. The mullets were sold in the markets of Washington (NC), New Bern, and Greenville. Fish barrels were carried there in sharpies by sail since there were no motor boats at that time.

Sometimes the fishermen would trade some of the mullets for corn and bring the corn here to the Island and grind it into

meal. There was a mill at Harkers Point and the old mill stones are still there.

An economic survey of North Carolina in 1907 reported that the common or "jumping" mullet was the most important food fish of the Beaufort waters. There was a demand in North Carolina and neighboring states for a cheap fish and mullet being of good quality and very abundant, it filled this demand.

A barrel of mullets weighing approximately 100 lbs. of fish sold for \$3.00. The mullet fishing usually lasted through November.

Some years later an ice plant was built at Beaufort and the blue fish and mackerel fishing began. Those engaged in this endeavor were Mart Lewis, Telford Willis, McKinley Lewis, Thomas Lewis, Ivey Gaskill, Howard Gaskill, Adrian Willis, Jimmy Styron, John L. Willis, and John Lewis. All of these fishermen sold their fish at Beaufort to a Mr. Will Potter. There were no fish houses on the Island at this time. These fishermen also engaged in mullet fishing during the fall.

The places where fishermen worked were also given names pertaining to the different types of fish caught there.

Spot Hauls - Smyrna, Battery Hole, Molly Bells, Brick Yard, Horse Marsh, North River, Polly Wags, Bottle Rum, Island Channel, Middle Ground, Hook, and Tom Martin's

Setting off for Spot - Cape Shore, Sware Pole Hill, Foot of the Rocks, Billy's Hill, Tom Martin's, Mart Guthrie's, Charlie Hancock's, Rennie and Danky's Place

Speckled Trout Spots (Rod and Reel) - Hammock Slough, Whitehurst Island, Short Turn, Billy's Hill, Hook, The Rocks, Inlet Rocks

Mullet - Mullet Shoal, Hammock Shoal, Horse Island, Whitehurst Island, Mullet Pond, Cape Shore, Shackleford Banks

Names of sets for channel net shrimp - Gold Mine, 44 Beacon, 42 Beacon, Bridge Set, Locust Tree, Shep's Stake, Front Set, Turtle Reef, Abe's Lump, Possum Hole, High Hill, Ed Moore's Point, Gut Gobble Shoal, Island Channel, John Gaskill's Shoal, Point of Shoal Rip, Drain, Short Turn.

The first fish house on Harkers Island was built by H. B. Hunter in 1929. Only clams and mullet were bought there at first. There are many seafood businesses now in operation of the Island handling every type of seafood and shellfish. Shrimp, croakers, speckled trout and the roe mullet are the principal money makers for the fishermen.

Commercial fishing is still going on. The torch has been passed from these old timers now gone to a new generation of their offspring using modern equipment. Where the old timers rowed and sailed, the new use boats that go fifty miles per hour. I am sure if they could see us now they would say, "What has this generation come to?"

Fun Fishin'

Helma Simpson

My first experience with trying to catch fish was baiting a hook with a piece of fat meat, using a net lead for a sinker and hanging it through the cracks in the dock down at the old C. P. Dey's Fish Factory, known today as the menhaden plant. We could see fish swimming under the dock, some of them quite large, but the small pinfish or perch always grabbed the line first.

My first experience with catching the "big" fish was in the early forties when several of the womenfolk were allowed to accompany the menfolks on a fishing trip. It happened this way ... My brother-in-law, who lived in New Jersey, had been on fishing trips off Sandy Hook, New Jersey. So when he came to visit us, bringing his father and brother with him, he made plans to take them on a fishing trip.

My brother hired a relative who ran a "buyboat" for one of the local fish dealers to take them fishing - trolling for blues and mackerel. Early that morning we boarded the boat and headed for the fishing grounds off Shackleford. With lines trailing behind the boat rigged with the proper lures, fish began to grab those lines. From then on, I was hooked on fishing.

My late husband, Monroe Simpson, had put a motor in a boat given to him by his father who no longer used it. The children and I really enjoyed the little boat, using it to go over to Shackleford for outings and swimming. Of course, their friends and our relatives enjoyed these trips with us. Later, we acquired a larger boat. Thus we were able to take more people with us and we could go further to the fishing grounds.

Fishin'

Ellen P. Simpson

*When I was a child of seven or eight,
I used to bet my line and bait;
I'd sit for hours on the dock,
And fish for sheephead under rocks.
Goin' fishin'.*

*I years, twenty to forty-three,
I was busy rearin' a family.
Still, oftentimes I'd be a wishin'
The chance again, to go a fishin'.
No fishin'.*

*At last, I got myself a boat,
Nothin' fancy, but t'would float.
And with Mama and baby daughter,
We'd spend long hours on the water.
Just fishin'.*

*Oft' times in the early hours of morn,
I'd hear someone call my name.
It would be Mama every time,
Saying, "Want to go out and pull the line?"
Fun fishin'.*

*When Mama got to ill to fish,
I'd still go but always wish,
That she too, could go out there,
Where fish were jumpin' everywhere.
Still fishin'.*

*Mow, my footsteps are getting slow,
And fishin' I no longer go.
But stay at home and heave a sigh,
And you'd have cause to wonder why?
No fishin'.*

Since my husband had to work during the week, he taught me how to operate the boat. Many summer and fall hours were enjoyed by those fortunate enough to be invited to go on these adventures. Many friends and relatives enjoyed these "fun fishin'" trips in and around the waters of Shackleford Channel and Beaufort Inlet. It was much pure fun catching these blues and mackerel, and later lots of bottom fish such as spot and hog fish.

Mama got "hooked" on this fishing bit, and early mornings during the summer and fall, I'd hear a scratch on my window and it would be Mama saying, "Want to go out and pull the line?" Even though I had plenty to do at home, I'd dress and feed my little girl, and out to "where the blues were biting" we'd go. We did not always catch fish, but most of the time we came home loaded (which would take longer to get rid of than to catch - and not near as much fun). My late brother-in-law stated in jest, "It's because you don't clean them."

In the fall of the year, these blues were big, fighting fish and were difficult to bet aboard and get the hook out of their mouth. Mama became vicious and sawed the corners of their mouths open so she could get the hook out and back in the water quickly. This was before the "outboard" made its appearance. Everyone respected the other boaters' rights to the water, and no one would willingly run across another's bow or cut across the stern. What fun we had!

A few years later we purchased one of those "fast running" outboards and sold the "Jolly Water Lily" as everyone lovingly called the first boat. This boat could go faster, but who was in a hurry anyway? At that time these boats were not fiberglassed (which we did later), so they could not be left in the salt water very long. I could not put it over or take it up, even though I could operate it. So my husband rigged me up another small boat and many more hours were spent going fishing, clamming or swimming from this little boat.

In the late fifties my husband had a larger boat built into which he installed a Chrysler marine engine he had rebuilt. This boat, "The Big M" was used to haul the beach at night, to pull a large shrimp trawl, or just to troll for bottom fish.

One fall, I recall, we had the most fun going down in the Harkers Island channel and fishing for gray trout. First, one hung a mantel lantern over the side and scooped up minnows that came to the light and kept alive in a bucket of

water. Lines were baited with these minnows and tossed over the side of the boat where trout quickly grabbed it. Off times we would catch near a hundred of these nice trout and shared them with friends and relatives.

One year, we joined the Banks shrimpers who pulled nets off Shackelford shore. As the tide began to come in, so did the shrimp. Two designated people grabbed the net and started down the beach with the tide, followed by someone with a gas lantern to light the way and enable the shrimpers to see if they had anything in the net. If so, it was quickly pulled ashore, dumped in a tub and the process repeated until everyone was worn out, or the tide changed. One night we hauled the nets until daylight, with only a brief span in between. Part of the crew headed the first batch, while others kept hauling the beach. We ended up with over two hundred pounds of these delicious shrimp, which we shared with others as always.

I still go fishing every chance I get and my family has been most kind in seeing that I get a change to go. Only last week, I went down on a friend's dock and caught a large flounder, two large puppy-drum and lost a big trout. (The ones that get away don't count, I'm told.)

Continued from page 2

From the Seafood Festival we moved quickly to the Heritage Festival at the County Museum which was a truly pleasant evening. Congratulations to the organizers of this fine event—let's do it again.

The next weekend was **The Mailboat's** Fall Get-Together which always proves to be work worthwhile. Those attending were treated to some of Down East's best food and finest folks. Our group included 37 teachers with a combined total of almost 700 years of teaching experience. It was an honor to be among such a group.

Since the Get-Together its been as busy as ever. School programs, maritime history council meetings, "getting-ready" for the Decoy Festival in a few weeks at Harkers Island, reprinting the Christmas book from last year, bringing together a new collection of stories for this year's Christmas collection, and finishing up this edition of **The Mailboat** has been non-stop. As soon as this is done, and the Decoy Program completed, then its Thanksgiving. The Decoy Festival follows the next weekend ... and then its Christmas "full-blast" ... Life is good!

My sincerest thanks to all of you for your continued patience with our publication. As you see from all **The Mailboat** is involved in, we are trying to be an active part of all preservation efforts in our area. It is important that we work together ... sharing our ideas, energies, talents, and dreams. When any of us enjoy a success we all win. It is the same heritage we are working to preserve.

The Mailboat has many exciting plans for 1992. We believe we have grown stronger in 1991, not only in subscriptions, but in convincing others we are here to stay. **The Mailboat** is dedicated to making a long-term effort in preserving and publishing these stories that might have been lost otherwise. In the spring we will begin our third year. We hope you will continue your interest and support. We have much to do.

Thank you again for every effort you have made to keep **The Mailboat** running. Our "Mailboat Partners" list is growing and we hope you will consider joining that group. With the help of those individuals we are working through these growing stages. With the continued support of our subscribers we will be here for years to come.

May your holidays be warm and wonderful filled with family and friends ... Let us hear from you!

Puppy-Drum

Ellen P. Simpson

*Heard channel bass of puppy-drum
Off Shackleford, were on the run.*

*Oil my reel, readied my rod,
With insulated boots, my feet were shod.*

*Donned my heavy underwear,
Gathered up foul weather gear.
Called a friend, who said, "Let's Go!"
We're on the way, in an hour or so.*

*Called our captain and engineer,
Always ready to take us there.
Loaded the boat, and got aboard,
Headed for the banks of Shackleford.*

*Loaded down with gear and bait,
We headed for where fish await.
Arms grown weary, feet more sore,
We finally reached the ocean's shore.*

*Men and boys were everywhere,
Could see, no women were expected there!
Ignoring stares of boys and men,
I baited my hook and waded in.*

*With boots too short and rigs too small,
I feared I couldn't cast at all.
'Twas worth a try, so I threw my line,
Stood my ground and bided my time.*

*I saw other fishermen cast so far,
I feared they'd reach Bermuda's shore.
While in the breakers fell my line,
I snagged a big one, very first time.*

*That fish swam left and he swam right,
I pulled for shore with all my might.
Reeled my line and pulled some more,
'Til soon that fish lay on the shore.*

*I baited again, and threw on out,
Fish were swimming all about.
Soon, the tide was coming in,
With heavy boots, I couldn't swim.*

*I let out more line and ran for shore,
Waves got higher, and that surf did roar.
Soon, I felt another bite,
Ran up the beach, with all my might.*

*That big old fish, how he did swim,
I reeled him in, and cast again.
I baited and cast, time after time,
Again and again, they grabbed my line.*

*We kept this up, 'til close of day,
Tired and weary, we made our way,
Back to our boat and home once more,
What fun we had on Shackleford shore!*

Continued from page 4.

after he left the Cape Banks and moved to Morehead in the late 1800's. When I was a little boy my grandmother would tell me tales of him, and one of them involved his fishing crew on the Banks. His crew fished to the east'ard end of Hoopole Creek for three main reasons. First, the distance from sea to sound was the shortest there of any place to the east'ard of Rice Path. Second, the beach was not wooded to the east end of Hoopole, so a path didn't have to be cut and maintained across the Banks. Third, although the Banks were not wooded there, just a short distance to the west'ard was plenty of wood, which was needed for heating and cooking. His crew had one of the fanciest rigs I ever heard tell of for carrying fish across the Banks. They had a tramway that ran from the top of the beach hill nearest the sea across the Banks to a little dock in Hoopole Creek. The fish were toted to the top of the hill and dumped into the tram cars. Then the cars were rolled off the hill and coasted all the way to the dock where the fish were dumped on boats and taken to Morehead. Then the cars had to be pushed back to the top of the hill, but now they were empty, so this job was fairly easy.

The first crew I actually remember was the Promise' Land crew with the two captains which I have already described. In the mid-forties my grandfather, "Uncle Howard" Lewis, his son and my uncle, Robert, and his brother-in-law and my great-uncle, Elmer Garner, all of Gales Creek, came to the Banks and fished with both Burnett Willis and "Little George" Smith in a camp that was real close to our house on the beach. It was nice having them there so close, and we were there with them whenever they hauled, if I wasn't snowed under with homework. They eventually moved up the Banks to Belco with Walter Willis' crew after my family moved to the sound side of the Banks in 1948. These three members of my family are all present in the crew in the accompanying photo.

In 1952 when I left to go to college there were 8 crews fishing the Banks of Bogue and I "knew" all of the captains and a lot of the men. Closest to Beaufort Inlet near Tar Landing Bay was Duffy's crew fishing to McClamroch's place, Captain Duffy Guthrie, Salter Path. Next to the west'ard was a crew to the

Dunes Club, Captain Darius Ballou, Morehead. To Atlantic Beach was a crew mostly of Moreheaders, Captain Charlie Sanders, Morehead. Further to the west'ard to the Tea House (the former site of Mrs. Alice Hoffman's tea house, in which she used to serve tea to her guests beside the sea) was Ligie's crew, Captain Elijah Smith, Salter Path. Then came the Red Bird Crew, reminiscent of the old Red Oar Crew over on Ca'e Banks, Captain Rushie Thomas Frost, Salter Path. Next in line at a spot between Salter Path and Rice Path was another crew, Captain Burnett Willis, Salter Path. Up the beach still further to Belco was the crew my relatives went with when they left the Main Beach, Captain Walter Willis, Salter Path. Finally the westernmost crew on all of Bogue Banks was at Rhodes' Path, Captain "Little George" Smith, Salter Path. All of these captains and most of the men are gone today.

As time passed by, the crews became more mechanized. Farm tractors were used to pull nets and boats, which were launched from trailers. The nets were now put out by powerboats, and were even pulled ashore by tractors. As more years rolled by, fewer and fewer men were needed to operate the fisheries, and then the camps were abandoned altogether, as the men commuted to work daily. Finally, the crews began to be superseded by fishing piers, with the number of the crews diminishing with each passing year. In 1952 there were 8 crews on Bogue Banks. Now there are 8 fishing piers. The "fisheries" have now mostly been replaced with fishing piers, the crews with solid crowds of surf fishermen from upcountry. The Era of the Crews that I remember has faded, as has the old Beach that I grew up in and loved.

I never got to fish in one of the fishing crews of Bogue Banks, but Capt. Josiah Bailey did. And, maybe one day he will write about it and tell us all what it was like to fish in one of the crews on Bogue Banks in the mid-forties, in the Era of the Crews.

Acknowledgements: I gratefully acknowledge with appreciation the kind assistance of Capt. Otis Pittman, Salter Path, a member of the "crews," in reviewing this article.

Continued from page 6.

We ate plenty of locally grown tomatoes and collards. We also got our share of baking powder biscuits (i.e. "lightening" biscuits) drowned in molasses. Any fellow that didn't like molasses would have been in trouble. Pork and beans were staples of every meal--Ritter's.

Of course, the cooks had the "pick" of every haul. Cooks are rarely undernourished. Neither were we. Few ate better than we during this period after World War II.

Grocery costs were deducted from the crew's gross receipts before we shared-up each week. Wartime food rationing affected us only as to sugar. Even that need not have. We "cooperated" more to save expenses and increase our individual shares than from any patriotic motives.

To be continued in the Winter edition of The Mailboat.

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The Lion Tamer's Club

Cap'n Jim

It rose up majestically and precipitously from out of the mists of Bogue Sound, towering way above us as we approached in our small skiffs on that slick ca'm Sunday evening of January in the winter of '49. It appeared both foreboding and yet inviting at the same time. The Banker in me cried out to stop way off and to only gaze upon the scene, never venturing close enough to touch or to be touched. The Mainlander in me wanted to rush pell-mell to the landing, scamper up onto the dock, throw open wide the doors, and explore every nook and cranny of the imposing edifice that stood before us. Soon we were at the landing, and the Mainlander had won out. As I stepped out onto the dock of this "House in the Middle of the Sound," little did I dream that in just a few years I would become the very last person to join the circle of friends who called this impressive structure their "Lodge," a group known up and down Bogue Sound as . . .



The Approach

By Johnny Baker, Artist

The Lion Tamer's Club

The Club began as a dream in the minds of a group of men from Morehead City. At the beginning of the 1920's they had watched hunting clubs spring up all over the state, but they were not members. They were not wealthy enough to afford to buy the land, to build the fancy lodge, to hire a year-round caretaker-guide, or to even make the long trips to the distant locations. They were just a bunch of average Moreheaders who wanted to hunt waterfowl like the wealthy tycoons from up North. Then one day they had an idea. They would face reality and have a lodge within their means. They would not buy land for a lodge, but would build it in the middle of the sound. They would not build it far away in Core or Pamlico Sounds, but would build it close to home in Bogue Sound. They would not hire a caretaker-guide. They would hire their own caretakers and guides. They would not hire someone to build their hunting lodge and blinds. They would build them by themselves.

This initial group was composed of Stamey Davis, father of Capt. Ethan Davis; Barney Matthews; Charlie Orlieb; Earl Piner; Robert "Bob" Wallace, husband of the late "Sissie" Wallace; and the two Royal cousins and great-grandsons of Mar-maduke Royal from the Cape, Fred, son of Joseph, and Ben, son of John. They called the club, which they formed to build and maintain their lodge, the Lion Tamer's Club, since they had all tamed the lions in their families, namely their wives. As a demonstration of their prowess as lion tamers, they never carried their wives to the lodge!

They chose a site for the lodge in the middle of Bogue Sound, far away from the hustle and bustle of Morehead, so as to be partially secluded. They picked a spot in the middle of the south side of the Little Drum Shoal, which was located about an

equal distance from Mrs. Hoffman's on the east, the mainland on the north, and Salter Path on the west. Since there was no habitation on the Banks between Salter Path and Mrs. Hoffman's, the site was as far removed from any settlement as was possible in Bogue Sound, and yet it was within a reasonable travelling distance of Morehead. The site would not cost anything because nobody owned it. The Little Drum Shoal had plenty of seagrass, a preferred food of waterfowl, and ample sites for blinds. It was just what the Doctor ordered.

Since the site of their lodge was in waters navigable at high water, they first got permission from the government (I assume from the Corps of Engineers) before starting construction. The lodge was built in three stages. The main building was built first with construction beginning in the early 1920's. Next came the Kelvinator and finally the Kitchen. A porch and dock were also added as appendages. Blinds were built on the same shoal on both sides of the lodge.

The main building was built facing south about 5 feet above the top of the shoal. There was just enough room for "Little Ethan" Davis, son of Capt. Stamey, to swing underneath while his daddy worked on the lodge. This structure was about 20 feet long by 10 feet wide with an A-frame roof. The roof and exterior was sheathed with tin (today called galvanized sheet metal). There were 4 wooden shutters, 2 on the front and 2 on the back, which opened inward to form windows. The shutters and the enormous door appeared to be about 6 inches thick, and the door contained 3 huge barn door locks and required a key about 8 inches long to open. In the center of this building stood a Warm Morning coal stove with a stove pipe sticking out

the top and on through the roof above. It was surrounded by bunk beds on all sides except where the doors came through.

The Kelvinator was built next. It was originally meant to store decoys, but later had added to it the more essential use as the Lodge "toilette." During my first visit I was shown the Kelvinator and told that it was the bathroom, actually an indoor outhouse; but, I was not told how it got its name. Now I must digress for a moment to discuss waste disposal in those days of long ago. In those days almost all waste, except glass, was biodegradable or corrodible, and when you were near the water, you either threw or flushed it overboard. It was the "in thing" to do. All boats and ships did it, and so did most towns. It was called "sanitary" disposal. And, the Lion Tamers did it too. Now, back to the Kelvinator.

Early the next morning after my first night at the lodge, I had a call from Mother Nature, which I answered and headed for the Kelvinator. The night before the wind had shifted to the northwest and was blowing quite a gale outside. I knew that Kelvinator was a brand of appliance, but I didn't know at that time that "Kelvinator" was mainly known for marketing the first refrigerator in Morehead. I was soon to experience personally why this structure was so named. As I entered the Kelvinator from the sleeping quarters, I noticed that it was a little airish, but this still did not prepare me for what happened next. The accommodations of the Kelvinator consisted of a single one-holer, raised above the floor the height of a normal commode, and crowned above by a real commode seat with nothing but the waters of Bogue Sound below. Most people know that commode seats are not the warmest appliances in the universe even in the middle of summer, but in the middle of winter, a commode seat in the Kelvinator could almost be lethal. As I took my seat on the self-flushing "water closet," suddenly my whole world turned to one of frigidity. The seat felt like it had been carved out of solid ice mined from the depths of the coldest glacier in Alaska. When you add to that a chill factor of about minus 120 degrees produced by a 20 knot northwest from straight off the polar ice cap howling up between my rear-end and the sculptured-from-ice commode seat, you can see that I was instantly in mortal danger. I thought fast. Quicker than you could say the "J" of "Jack Robinson," I finished my business, wiped, and got back inside the main building. After a solid hour of baking my exposed bare bottom about 6 inches away from a red hot Warm Morning coal stove, a slight twinge of feeling finally returned to my lower quarters. I had learned first hand why the room to the westward was called "the Kelvinator." I found out later on that Barney Matthews, one of the founders of the club, had the Kelvinator dealership in Morehead when "the Kelvinator" was built, so it was named in honor of him.

The kitchen was built adjoining the main lodge on the east end and was about 9 feet long by 10 feet wide in dimensions. On my first visit it had a kerosene cook stove (later replaced by gas), a dining table, and a sink with running water when somebody operated the hand pump. One of the first things the builders did was to sink an artesian well, which overflowed all year round. The water was piped so that it could be pumped into the kitchen, and, when not pumped, would flow overboard at the landing.

The whole lodge had electric lights provided by a 6-volt battery, which required recharging on each return trip. Ice for the ice box had to be brought along on each trip unless you were lucky enough to have a portable generator and refrigerator, which you could carry along.

After the Lodge was built, since it rested on the Little Drum Shoal, it was dubbed almost immediately "Drum Shoal House" by the crowd from the Banks and a lot of them from the Mainland. And, by this name it was known for over 30 years. For years the Lodge was even shown on all the charts of the area with the name of "House." The years went by, and many hunting trips were made with many waterfowl bagged. Then one summer fate intervened in the affairs of the club.

On that fateful summer in the late 1920's, Capt. Stamey Davis made a crucial decision that not only broke the established and cherished tradition of the club, but also affected it fundamentally from that day forward. That summer he carried his wife and family to the Lodge! Heaven forbid! At that moment in time the former hunting lodge of the Lion Tamers was transformed into the summertime camp of the tamed Lion Tamers. Even in name "the Lodge" now became "the Camp." Thereafter, all the families looked forward to their week at "the Camp" each summer. Hunting now took a back seat to "camping."

By the early fifties, the original members were getting along in years, and most of them had their own camps on the mainland, which they could drive their cars right up to instead of travelling half the distance across Bogue Sound in a boat. The hunting wasn't what it used to be either. So, their interest in the camp waned. It was then that the "new crowd" came along.

In 1946 Bob Wallace, who was called "Robert" on Atlantic Beach, joined the Rocking Chair Valley Club, an unofficial social, hunting, and drinking club on the Beach. This club always made an annual camping and hunting trip up the Banks in the wintertime, and Robert went along in 1946 and the two years that followed. In 1949, he talked the rest of the members into leaving their usual campsite ashore and moving to the Lion Tamer's Camp offshore, where he was a member. Since I was a non-drinking member of the Rocking Chair Valley Club, I made the trip with them to the camp for the first time on the Sunday evening mentioned above. My uncle, John Baker, was in the same club and also went to the camp that year. On that trip he fell in love with the place and soon after joined the Club. So did Garth Cooper, another Rocking Chair Valley Club member. These two men became the main leaders of the "new crowd" who were "taken in" the Lion Tamer's Club in the early fifties.

My Uncle John and his family started going to the camp a lot in the spring and summer, and I started going with them. I also came to love the place dearly. We clammed, fished with the net and with lines, floundered, crabbed, explored, swam, and just plain had fun. There were no flies, mosquitoes, or sand gnats there, since it was in the middle of the Sound. The food always tasted better there than on shore. The camp was always naturally air-conditioned, even in the hottest weather. It was from the camp that I made my first trip to the legendary Rice Path and Belco, two places way up to the westward Banks that I had heard about all my life but never visited. On the interior walls of the

main building was written a history of the many trips made by the members and their friends in the years gone by. I loved to sit and read them for hours on end, and never did finish them all.

The Lodge, now the Camp, usually always had a boat, which the members used to get back and forth from Morehead. After "Camp" status was attained, they used to pickup weekend guests across the Sound from either Earl Webb's or Alton Bland's in order to avoid the long trip from Morehead by boat. After I started going there in the early fifties, we would frequently drive to Salter Path and take skiffs out to the camp from there. It was nice going ashore to Salter Path, and I made many friends there. Many times we would have visits from that crowd on the Banks, and I have never forgotten them. In the summer-time, we would also have frequent visits by the "campers" from Camp Morehead, who would stop by to get water from our overflow well.

In October of 1954 the Lodge of the Lion Tamer's kept a date with destiny, when a lady from the tropics made a rendezvous with our coast. Her name was Hazel, and she struck with fury on Friday the 15th as only a hurricane can. The Lodge stood firm; it had been through many storms before. But then, the surge of the storm broke through the Banks to the west'ard where they had been weakened by the works of man. As the deluge poured into Bogue Sound, the water rose to an unprecedented height. The Lodge wavered; then as the water came higher, it could stand the strain no longer and broke away from its home on the little Drum Shoal. It was beaten and battered by the wind and waves and scattered across the breadth of the Sound that it had watched over for so many years. The Lodge of the Lion Tamer's was gone.

Undaunted, the "new crowd," especially my Uncle John and Garth, were determined to rebuild, and rebuild they did. On the same site, with the same plan, but just slightly higher off the water, they built a new lodge. And, I helped in the building. Soon it was completed and ready for use. It was nice and new, but it lacked the atmosphere of the old one.

In 1961 when I finally came home from college for good, I joined the Lion Tamer's Club as its last member. Shortly thereafter, my Uncle John and I bought a boat together, a 21 ft. Chris

Craft with two 100 hp engines. With her we could go to the camp in a fourth of the time it took in the old camp boat. In the summer of 1963 we went to the camp for the very last time, although none of us knew it would be our last. It was good trip; I have never forgotten it. The following year my Uncle John passed away, and with his passing so passed my days at the Lion Tamer's. I knew that things would never be the same without him, and I never went to "the Camp" again. I miss him still today. By then Garth Cooper had his own camp on the Beach, and without the support of Uncle John, his interest in "the Camp" also faded.

As the members faded away, so did their lodge, until one day it was gone, and nobody can remember when it went away. Now where once stood the great Lodge of the Lion Tamers, all that's left are two pilings and the old overflow well, and it flows no longer. And, where once there were many members, today there remain only two, for Capt. Ethan Davis and myself are the last. And, they say on the Banks that when the last of the pilings are gone, so will be the last of the Lion Tamer's, but the overflow well will always remain, standing as a silent monument to the friends who hunted and camped there so long ago, and who called themselves by the name of, "The Lion Tamer's Club."

Acknowledgements: In the preparation of this article I should like to acknowledge with grateful appreciation the assistance of the following friends: Robert "Bob" Wallace, LTC (Lion Tamer's Club), RCVC (Rocking Chair Valley Club), Morehead City, deceased, for making it possible for me to visit "the Camp" in 1949 and for sharing with me his memories of the construction of the lodge; my uncle, John Baker, LTC, RCVC, Atlantic Beach, deceased, for making it possible for me to become a Lion Tamer; my cousin, Johnny Baker, RCVC, OBES (Outer Banks Exploring Society), Atlantic Beach, deceased, for sharing so many good times at "the Camp" with me and for leaving me his drawing of "The Approach," which is featured at the beginning of this article; and Capt. Ethan Davis, LTC, Morehead City, for sharing with me his photographs and his vast knowledge of the history of the Lion Tamers.

Cap'm Jim, LTC, RCVC, OBES



Lion Tamer's Club Scrapbook (Photos collected by Cap'm Jim Willis)

"The Task Had Just Commenced"

Bonnie Hine

Eighty years ago, two men sat on the back of George Dill's drugstore in Morehead City and talked about plans for a hospital.

Elsewhere in the world, 1911 saw the collapse of the Chinese Empire and Marie Curie win the Nobel Prize for Chemistry. Irving Berlin wrote "Alexander's Ragtime Band" and the Mona Lisa was stolen from the Louvre. And two of Morehead City's leading citizens saw the need for a hospital and did something about it.

In 1911, Morehead City was just over a half-century old and couldn't really be considered a full-blown city; it was a good sized fishing village with about 1500 fairly healthy people. One train a day made the 38-mile run to New Bern and the nearest hospital. Isolated farms and communities on the land side were linked only by deeply rutted cart tracks or sand washed paths, and travel by boat was the only way to reach the downeast fishing villages that were scattered along the edges of the sounds and the Outer Banks.

The lure of the sea and the attraction of sailing, swimming, and fishing in warm and clean waters attracted large numbers of visitors, many of whom came back every summer or, preferring to spend the rest of their lives on this pleasant coast, stayed to become permanent residents of Carteret County. There was no doubt about it, these newcomers plus the families of the descendants of the original settlers of the county, brought with them (as Dr. Royal once quoted) "all of the ills to which the flesh is heir" and the need to provide adequate and immediate care for the sick and injured became a primary concern.

Dr. Ben F. Royal had just completed his "doctoring course" and was sitting in the back of the drug store, on a Sunday afternoon, whittling and hatching plans for the hospital with Mr. George Dill. They decided to find out if the upstairs of the Paragon Building could be rented as space for the hospital.

The Paragon Building in the 800 block of Morehead City, was owned by Mr. L. L. Leary, president of the Paragon Company, a popular dry good and furnishings store. It was constructed of cement blocks and was two stories in height and covered a ground area of 75 x 100 feet. The ground floor was occupied by the dry good store and Mr. George Dill's drug store. There was a small undertaking establishment behind the drug store with a room "stacked high with coffins" and with the advent of the hospital, the Paragon Building would become quite a compact enterprise.

Dr. Royal had convinced the citizens of Morehead City that they did indeed need a hospital and he persuaded many of them to buy \$25 shares of stock to finance the project. He raised \$3,000 and the Morehead City Hospital began to take shape.

Nurse Edith Broadway, who became the first superintendent of the hospital, left a written record of these early beginnings: "We went up and made the arrangements with Mr. Leary

and rented the space for \$40.00 a month. The arrangements being completed, the task had just commenced." The space they rented on the east side of the building was half of the second floor, less than 40 x 100 feet.

Miss Broadway described the layout of the hospital: "The rooms consisted of our nice large front room which we called our best private room. Of course, at times there had to be more than one bed in it - emergencies, you know; next to this was a room for the nurses, then my room, then the office, which later became Dr. Royal's office."

"On the other side was the emergency room, the sterilizing room and the operating room. Then we had what we called the women's ward, then the kitchen, the dining room (which had to be used as a recreation room, too), a linen closet, a small store room and then a very little room where we put our very fine and much loved x-ray equipment, then a bath and then a men's ward."

Miss Broadway's description makes one think this was a cozy but ample area; however, in the beginning there was room for only seven beds and unfortunately, there was no elevator. Those patients too sick or injured to climb stairs were met by Dr. Royal who carried them in his powerful arms up the steep 31-step flight of stairs, delivering them safely into the care of Miss Broadway.

The civic pride felt by the business leaders and citizens of Morehead City in their new hospital is evident in an article that appeared in "The Coaster," a local newspaper of the period. A special edition published on October 31, 1913 about "Leading Business Interests" contained the following report:

"Morehead City Hospital is a handsome and well equipped hospital. Since its establishment about two years ago, the work performed by the physicians and nurses in charge of medical and surgical cases has been of invaluable benefit to the people of this section. A rapid expansion of its usefulness has been met by substantial support of leading citizens as stockholders until Morehead City can now claim without exaggeration, that it has as well appointed and equipped a hospital as any town in the state. With the new improvements recently completed, there is now room for 30 beds, the hospital and its adjuncts, such as office and diet kitchen, now occupy the entire second floor of the Paragon Building."

"All modern conveniences are supplied for the care and comfort of patients, electric drop bells for each bed, toilet and bathrooms being installed according to strict sanitary methods, light and fresh air in abundance and a large porch for convalescents and children extending the whole length of the building in the rear."

"The operating room is deserving of special mention: situated in a perfectly lighted corner, it is a model of cleanliness and professional appliances for the delicate work of the sur-

Miss Ollie & Dr. Moore

Joel Hancock

You didn't take kids to the doctor just because they weren't feeling well. Everyone, young and old, had days when they didn't feel well and it was just considered a normal part of life. Every mother had her own repertoire of home remedies that applied to almost any malady and these were the first line of defense against any illness or injury.

If a condition persisted or worsened dramatically, the next option was to call on the neighborhood "specialist" whom everyone recognized as the best thing short of real doctor for diagnosing and treating common ailments. At "Red Hill" that somebody was Marianne Willis, while at the "Eastard" it was Annie Rose. But in our neighborhood that was most certainly "Miss Ollie." Ollie Willis, sometimes called "Big Ollie" to distinguish her from her daughter of the same name, had predetermined remedies for anything that could be imagined. More importantly, most of them seemed to work.

Miss Ollie used to be especially gifted at dealing with skin problems such as "ground itch," hornet stings, and the ever present boils that were associated with spending at least half of your life in and around salt water. She even concocted her own "black salve" that was known all over the Island as the most potent balm anywhere to be found for dealing with such problems. In the normal hyperbole of Island talk, I have heard my parents claim that Ollie's salve could "draw an iron nail out of a piece of heart pine."

Walking barefoot on the Island's shore caused lots of cuts and scrapes. The bottom of my brother Telford's feet sometimes looked like the plat for a city map, and one that was laid out with no concern for straight lines and easy access.

The most painful "foot ailments" most assuredly were those associated with stepping on the exposed nails, usually rusty ones, that were the excruciating by-product of discarded boat timbers and planking. Almost always the wound would swell and harden and cause almost unbearable discomfort. Finally, someone would send for Ollie, or at least for a spoonful of her salve, and within hours, or so it seemed, the infection would ease. Her magic potion would cause the offending particles and fragments to rise to the surface of the wound so that loving hands could wash it clean and allow the healing process to be completed.

Yet there were times when even Miss Ollie's salve couldn't help and a real doctor was needed. But because any expense was often "too much," my parents made sure that all other avenues had been explored before taking us children to Beaufort to see Dr. Moore, Dr. Fulcher, or Dr. Salter. One way to avoid official visits was to wait until word came that Dr. Moore was spending the weekend at his camp on Shackleford Banks. For some reason it was assumed that going to see him there was a "personal" call and hence there was no obligation to offer any payment. As I grew older and came to know him better I realized that Dr. Moore probably would not have accepted any money even if offered on those such occasions.

Dr. Laurie Moore lived in Beaufort but had grown up in Marshallberg. His family, the "Tyre Moore crowd," named after his father, had earlier lived at Shackleford Banks before the exodus that followed the great hurricane of 1899. Most of the family settled at Harkers Island but Tyre and his sons took up residence at Marshallberg. Dr. Moore's camp on the Banks, near the mouth of Whale Creek Bay, was situated very near where the old family home place had been generations earlier. His Harkers Island cousins would attend to his needs while there, running back and forth across the Sound several times each day as he might need them. It generally was from them that everyone knew when he was at the Banks and open for "company."

Dr. Moore was considered somewhat of a hero among most of the people of the Island. There were many reasons for that respect and affection but two special ones come to mind most frequently. First, he was the very first of the Banks crowd to go off to college and come back a doctor. I was always told that it was while pulling in a net on a cold fall morning that he made up his mind that fishing was not for him. Within weeks he had moved to Winston Salem where he eventually earned his medical degree. So to down easters he was one of their own who had made it in the world doing something other than living out of the water.

Secondly, and perhaps most importantly, he never "forgot where he came from" and was always willing to care for the poor people of Down East with no consideration for their ability to pay him. Dr. Moore always seemed to be just another one of the ordinary folks, but one with extraordinary compassion and an ability to help.

So it was that I can well remember those times when my father would take me in his boat, across Back Sound, to Dr. Moore's camp. His attention was needed most frequently to deal with the ear aches that were so frequently a part of my youthful experience. Mama would wrap my head with warm towels and blankets and Daddy would secure me in the front of his open boat, just under the forward deck to shield me from the wind and the spray as the boat broke through the "seas" (people on the Island refer to cresting waves as "seas.") He would head due southwest across back sound into the mouth of "Bottarum Bay." He would then weave through the marshes to the shore where Dr. Moore's camp sat some one hundred yards or so up on the land.

Daddy would carry me to the shore in his arms and together we would walk up to where Dr. Moore was usually resting out on his porch.

"Hey, Charlie Bill, which one of your youngerns is that," he would ask, referring to the fact that Daddy had ten. Daddy would tell him my name but I don't think Dr. Moore really listened. He had no hopes of ever knowing all of us by our first names, the mere fact that we were Charlie and Margaret's children was all that mattered to him. He would ask about

Hog Island Old Bottles

Laughton Willis

Sally Day was a midwife on Hog Island during the Civil War and dispensed folk remedies and medicines for the less serious illnesses. Many 19th-century patent medicine bottles have been found on Hog Island, and Sally Day's patients may have used some of them. Here is a partial listing of these quaintly-named mixtures: "Dr. DeWitt's Eclectic Cure"; "Chamberlain's Colic, Cholera And Diarrhea Remedy"; "Konjola"; "Dr. Thatcher's Worm Syrup"; "C. R. Bailey's Rexoleum"; an unlikely concoction called "Hale's Honey of Horehound And Tar"; and, of course, the ubiquitous, opium-filled and addictive "Bateman's Drops."

These patent medicines, many with narcotic alkaloids, were contained in cork-stoppered bottles with amethyst-, aqua- or amber-tinted glass. More of these medicine's catchy brand names were "Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup"; "Sloan's N & B Liniment"; "Phalon's Vitalia"; "Atwood's Jaundice Bitters"; "Dr. Pierce's Anuric Tablets For Kidneys and Backache"; "Febriline"; "Cardui, The Woman's Tonic"; "Mrs. Dinsmore's Cough & Croup Balm"; "Miller's Herb Juice Antiseptic Oil"; "Hick's Capudine For Headaches, Colds and Gripp"; "St. Andrews' Nerve Builder"; "Foley's Honey And Tar"; "Fletcher's Castoria"; "Groves' Tasteless Chill Tonic"; "Dr. Kilmer's Swamp Root: Kidney, Liver And Bladder Remedy"; "Honey Tolu"; "Davis' Vegetable Pain Killer"; "St. Joseph's, The Name Assures Purity"; not to mention the awful-tasting "Scott's Emulsion: Cod Liver Oil With Lime And Soda"; and the impossible-sounding "Dr. Simmon's Squaw Vine Wine Compound."

There were various medicine bottles with less ornate, non-descript names. They include "Dr. Miles Medicine Company"; "Spartan Drugs"; "Wade Boykin & Co. Wholesale Druggist";

"Sultan Drug Company"; "The Loewy Drug Company"; and "McCarrick And Lewis Wholesale Druggists."

One Hog Island bottle, "F. S. Duffy Druggist, New Berne," came from the old, Irish McDuffy pharmacy in New Bern. A bottle found at Sally Day's Lola homesite came from "Bradham Drug Company" which was owned by the New Bern druggist who developed Pepsi Cola. Today, Hog Island has been plundered of all its old refuse. Altogether, though, there was a pretty impressive assortment of bottles--and drugs--used by somebody on this now-abandoned isle.

We are looking for more stories about County Hospitals, doctors and nurses, etc. Contact The Mailboat, or Bonnie Hine at (19) 247-2471 if you or someone you know would like to contribute.

Continued from page 15

Mama and the rest of the kids and then about Louie, Daddy's brother, and several other of the old people in the neighborhood. But as he was talking to Daddy he would be pulling me towards him and beginning to diagnose the problem that must have caused Daddy to bring me with him.

Should I live to be a hundred years old, I will never forget the gentleness in his soft hands as he explored around my sore ear. Because of the swelling that usually accompanied such infections, my ear and neck would be so tender that I could scarcely allow even my mother to touch it. But Dr. Moore's hands seemed to be endowed with some special soothing aura that allowed him to explore and examine without causing even the slightest of pain.

After just a few moments, he would assure my father that there was no need for undue concern, and tell him what medicine and treatments he wanted to have started. Sometimes

he would write out a prescription to be purchased from the drug store, but more often he pulled something out of his little black bag and gave it to us with only his oral instructions.

"Now, go ahead and get him home and out of this wind," he would say, signalling to my father that the checkup was over and allowing us to leave gracefully with no mention of any payment or obligations. Then we would make our way in reverse order of how we had come, but with daddy, and later mama, now relieved that they had done their part to make sure nothing more than an "ear ache" had been the culprit.

Many others of my generation, and the ones before me, have similar memories and stories of Dr. Moore. In the days before "Social Services" and the County Health Department, he and other like him cared for the families of eastern Carteret County with a depth of feeling that made him more than just a doctor, he was a part of the family.

*John's Creek Diary**Madge Guthrie*

October - Early morning: I'm enjoying the quiet hush before everything "breaks-loose." I take my cup of coffee, go out on the porch, have a seat at a table there and look out over the creek. John's Creek is still as a painting, reflecting boats and marshes with never a ripple. October is extra special. Mother Nature has grown tired of painting everything "green n' flowery." She has washed her paint brush, changed her paints and is already touching everything with gold, red, amber and bronze. The grapevines gleam yellow gold in early sunlight, dogwood trees blaze scarlet and bronze, vines in the trees along the shore are deepest scarlet all with just enough evergreen pine and cedar to set it off. This is the break between everlasting summer and the bleak gray of winter.

I decide I'll take a walk to my grandparents old homeplace. I head-out along the edge of the marsh and see the October changes there, then up the hill past the garden that's shut-down it's production and on to where the hundred-year-old oak stands guard outside the kitchen windows. I take a seat at its base and -- you guessed it -- memory starts its flashbacks.

"This Ole House" is where I was born in October (and returned here from my "wanderings" 30 years later with my youngest daughter who was born on the same date). I was born on a Sunday morning, my uncle had gone to Beaufort on Saturday evening and brought Dr. Hyde back. Doc spent the night on a couch beside mother's bed and delivered me the next morning. When he left his bill was \$6.00. I never heard Mother mention anything about the "ordeal," just contended until she died (fifty years later) that she "never saw an October 26th that wasn't beautiful."

This oak was the foundation for many a playhouse. Its huge branches supported splendid imaginary rooms, and its downstairs kitchen cooked-up glorious chocolate cakes of black mud with soap suds icing, grape drinks of polkberry juice, pots of collards from merkle bush leaves in water ... imagination was important then!

Here's where I lived for three years and then moved about 600 feet to where my parents built our home. At one time there were ten people living together with no conflict in Grandpa's house. All ten of us have ended up living back on this island, most of us around John's Creek.

Grandpa had a big garden that spread from the picket fence down to the shore. There was a well in it where we watered the garden. In October the fresh dug 'taters were stored in sod "wig-wams" and the 'ish 'taters spread under the back pizer on old linoleum. There were long rows of three-foot high collards. Big runs of fish are coming this month and that called for collards. Meals of fried spots, collards, baked sweet 'taters and hot light rolls ... that's October.

Many times we'd go over to Shackleford Banks at Wades Shore where we used to have an old fishing camp. We went right at sundown and set out our nets along the shore. The women would fire-up the old cookstove and put a pan of sweet 'taters in the oven, the coffee pot on and socialize by the warmth and light

of the lantern until we could fish the net. Then several big yellow-fin spots were cleaned on the porch, brought in and fried in lard. (Nothing else fries fish like lard!) After this supper, we'd turn down the lamps and stove and pile into beds under quilts and drift to sleep to the slap of the water nearby. I remember many nights when we were the only ones there. The Banks was not just for summer.

October brought the first "cold water oysters." (They were better than the ones we had eaten all summer!) The smell of the first oyster roast over dried oak brush and THAT TASTE ... with Pepsi, fried cornbread and sour pickles!! One special roast was as a teenager we wanted something to do one night, so we went to the bridge at "Spark's Landing" and off come our shoes and socks, and by flashlight we picked up oysters. Then we pulled dried brush from the dark woods. While I'm holding the light for the boys to get the brush, suddenly I catch sight of the biggest yellow moon I had ever seen breaking over the Straits sky. (Still one of the views man and progress hasn't managed to change.) In my excitement I turn the light away. I got my composure and switch the light back to the boys and there they were, just sitting in the bushes waiting for me to "get my senses back." One of them said, "Nobody but you would turn a flashlight on the moon!"

From all these wonderful October memories I come back to this October and I take another look around. Much around here has changed but the old home (built around 1900) remains much the same, and my oak stands firm and solid and as I head home the "October Sunshine" makes everything look right.

*Recipes from John's Creek***"Salmagundi"**

(I'd always thought "salmagundi" was a word for "this 'n that thrown together" but I found a recipe for salmagundi in a 1915 Larkin Cookbook. Here it is ... as it was recorded there.)

"Cook for twenty minutes in boiling salted water, two cups of short-cut macaroni. Drain, blanch in cold water. Have ready about half a pound of cold cooked beef. Cut in cubes. Put into a casserole, a layer of macaroni, then a layer of meat, a layer of sliced onion, then a layer of tomatoes (canned or fresh). Dust over a little salt and pepper and dot with butter. Continue layers until all is used up. Have a layer of cracker meal on top. Pour over any gravy you have, if not sufficient, use a little milk or water. Bake forty-five minutes. This is delicious and makes a good hearty meal."

Atlantic Memories

This article was written by Louise Holloway Mason in 1980 for a talk given to the "Fun and Fellowship Club" in Atlantic, NC. It was brought to The Mailboat by Pauline Smith of Beaufort.

Background: Louise Holloway Mason married Michael A. Mason on July 27, 1921. They had four children: James Anderson Mason (died at 18 months); Pauline Mason Smith; Michael A. "Andy" Mason, Jr.; and Nancy Mason Moore

In 1961, Mike and Louise moved from Core Creek to Atlantic when he retired and enjoyed life there until his death on April 25, 1967. Louise died January 13, 1983.

Louise was principal at Cedar Island School in 1923(?). She went by boat to Cedar Island on Sunday, boarded with family there, and came back to Atlantic on Friday. Mike was a commercial fisherman at that time.

"I am going to speak about things that were part of our lives in the early years when I became part of Atlantic - so my title will be ...

"I Remember When ..."

It was 1921 - a year of excitement, surprises and new experiences for me. I finished high school in Columbia, NC, went to summer school to become a teacher and married Mike A. Mason (from Atlantic who was teaching in Columbia) - all in the summer of 1921. We were married in Columbia, had a beautiful church wedding at 8:00 in the morning, caught a train out of town at 10 o'clock and traveled to New Bern where we spent the night in the Gaston Hotel. Next morning we got on another train to Beaufort. There we boarded a boat [the mailboat] to come to Atlantic - no highways to Atlantic.

Remember the mailboat? It took about four hours to come from Beaufort to Atlantic because the boat stopped at every village to put off passengers and mail. I was not a sailor, so even before we started, Mike bought lemons, so I sucked lemons all day. (I don't know if I was sick from the boat ride or the lemons!)

Finally we came in sight of Atlantic - how happy I was to think the boat ride was ending! But then there was a long wharf to walk before we hit solid dirt! But, wait, there was yet another surprise waiting for me! When I stepped off the wharf, I found out the land wasn't solid - it was pure black sand that filled my beautiful black satin high heels! To complicate matters, we had a long walk to Mike's parents home on the Shell Road. Needless to say, my shoes were ruined and my spirits low!

Can you imagine what I found when we arrive at Mike's parents' home - a "getting-over panel"! The yards were fenced in, but no gates. There was a step on the outside; you stepped over the fence and there was a step inside.

We stayed in Atlantic until September, then moved to Sneads Ferry, NC. I taught two years there in a four-teacher school. Mike was principal and I was a primary teacher, with a few music pupils on the side. Mike's salary was \$125 a month and mine \$75.

By this time, after two years in Sneads Ferry, the roads were open to Atlantic. We bought us a brand new, four-door Ford and went back to Atlantic. Our new car was a "touring car" with snap-on curtains. I think we paid \$600 cash for it.

By this time, there were a few cars on Atlantic. Trucks were coming in to bring fresh produce, soda pop, ice cream, milk, ice and other fantastic things.

Do you remember how we combed our hair -- dog-ears, teased pompadours, switches and braids -- and hose with seams and how much time we spent getting the seams straight? Do you recall the hours we spent washing on a scrub board, boiling clothes in an iron pot in the backyard, ironing with flat irons, scouring the floors and porches with lye or sand, trying to keep the old iron stove polished?

Remember when we washed our hair with Octagon soap and dried it in the sun. Do you remember the 2-cent postage stamp, Lovie Jane Morris' milk punches, the all-week Black Dow sucker, Winston's ice cream shop where we could go it, sit down and enjoy ourselves?

Atlantic had quite a few interesting stores -- Cecil Morris, Clyde Morris, Winston's, Dee Mason's, Luther Smith's, Melvin Robinson's ...

Then we were blessed with electric lights, early 40's, I think. This opened up a new life for us -- a new school, churches. I remember our first picture show. It was in the school house (I think Mr. Paul from Beaufort brought the movie reel down to Atlantic.)

Since Atlantic was producing so many teachers, our board of education added an extra course in our school so teachers could stay home and get a certificate or renew their certificates for teaching.

Our little village of Atlantic was progressing -- two theaters, bus service, stores -- but then came the Depression. With the WPA our men dug ditches, clammed for 40-cent a bushel in trade or anything they could do to support their families. It was during the Depression that Mike got a job on Core Creek Bridge and we left Atlantic for 20 years.

Then came Pearl Harbor. War broke out -- remember food rationing, food stamps, no ties or gasoline, blackouts on the coast, fear of enemy submarines.

People on the coast were lucky. We had plenty of seafood to eat, and also dried beans, collards, molasses, sweet potatoes, and green huckleberry dumplings!

Some have called these "the good, old days" and they were good days because we knew no better, but would you want to go back to them? A very hard question to answer ...

Atlantic School Memories

Dear Mailboat,

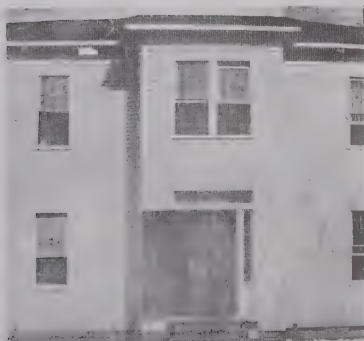
... I am interested in keeping alive memories of Carteret County and am especially interested in the Atlantic schools. Atlantic had one of the first high schools in North Carolina and before that there was an outstanding private school – always referred to as the "Academy." Even after the high school came, the older residents always referred to it as the "Academy."

I graduated from Atlantic High School May 9, 1924. There were nine girls in my class - no boys. Of the nine, five are still living, four of them in Atlantic. Our class was the first to graduate in the new brick building located on the Shell Road. It had three floors. Our principal was a local man, Joseph W. Hamilton. In the fall of 1924 the Teacher Training Department was added – the only one in the eastern part of the state. Miss Meriel Groves from New Bern was the Teacher-Director. She was an outstanding educator. She followed Mr. Hamilton the next year as principal and Miss Berta Coltrane from Pittsboro, NC became Teacher Training Director. Out of the nine who graduated in my class, six took the teacher training and I think five taught at least one year. I taught 44 years and retired in 1971. Several girls, who had been teaching for sometime, came back to the course. We had one boy in the class - Justin Robinson - who was the owner of the R. and N. Furniture Store in Morehead City.

I am enclosing several old photographs. The white frame building stood in the oak grove near the Methodist Church and was where I started school. The brick building was where I graduated in 1924. The Teacher Training Department was in the basement.

I'm about halfway to my 85th birthday, but I still enjoy going back to the old home in Atlantic ...

Daisy M. Banks
2730 Anderson Drive
Raleigh, NC 27608



"The white frame building stood in the oak grove near the Methodist church and was where I started school." (Daisy M. Banks)

Notes from the Fall Get-Together

Letters ...

... Words cannot adequately express what the "celebration" on Saturday night meant and I am sure that I speak for all the teachers that attended. I know that it took a great deal of time, thought and expertise in organizing it.

The food was delicious and the speakers were enjoyed. All of them were good but I especially thought Mr. Reginald Styron's was exceptional.

I will wear the golden apple with pride ...

Mrs. Grace Fodrie

Thank you again for a job well-done? I thought it was great to see thirty-five teachers attending the "Gathering" along with the other interested people. The occasion was a good one.

Joe-Boy looked the same to me. I hope to have the opportunity to see him again and have time for a good, long conversation.

Thank you very much for the golden apple. I shall "wear it with pride!"

"Miss" Barbara Willis

Saturday evening stands out as being one of the most enjoyable I've had in some time. The food and atmosphere (cute flower pots with daisies!!) were delicious. The MC and speakers were just great! I laughed until I was almost embarrassed. Many time tears filled my eyes.

I wore my apple pin today with the blue ribbon. I was refreshed and proud to be a teacher and thankful as always to live in Carteret County.

I admire the work **The Mailboat** does and the love you put into your work!

Betsy Aleshire



"The brick building was where I graduated in 1924. The Teacher Training Department was in the basement." (Daisy M. Banks)

The Big Man and the Mule

Clarence Satter

Our school would let out about 3:00 in the afternoon. It was a little two-room schoolhouse in Bettie. The two rooms were separated by a partition in the middle, with a door from one side to the other. Each room had a pot belly stove to take the chill out on cold winter days. The school is no longer there, but the memories linger on in the minds of the boys and girls that went there.

Ruth Gibbs was our first, second and third grade teacher and I do believe everyone she taught loved her. She gave me more "lickens" than my parents. The other kids got it too, when they got outta' hand. Edna Willis was our fourth, fifth and sixth grade teacher and a mighty fine teacher she was too. She didn't have to paddle me too much because I had learned a lesson the hard way from Miss Gibbs. On this particular day, I think it was in March, most of the farmers were plowing the fields getting ready for spring planting. Most of the plowing was done by horse or mules. Back in 1934-34, not many people could afford tractors. Anyhow, we kinds started home from school. There were quite a few of us. I think there were at least a dozen in my class. We all had chores to do before dark. Some of the older ones had to work in the fields till it was supper time. Daphne Pake, Dolena Gillikin, Marvin Pake, Alice Mason and Douglas Arthur were just a few of my classmates, and also some of my best friends.

On this day however, we were stretched out going "up the road" and Jack Arthur and I were plodding along behind. I was a little older than Jack and he was in the class behind me. I think he was in the second grade, as we lollygagged along. We would kick a can or throw dirt clods at a frog or something, maybe a bird if one was close. We were just taking our good old time going home. As we passed Cleveland Gillikin's store (the only one in Bettie at the time), there was the biggest man plowing a field on the opposite side of the road from the store! As I recall I think his name was Frank Gillikin. He was almost as big as the mule and do doubt, just as strong. Jack said "he should be pulling the plow," and we both laughed. When we came abreast of him and we were only thirty feet or so away, we had a "snap." The trace chain broke. For those who don't know, a trace chain runs from the plow to the collar around the mules neck. Frank began to cuss a little. He wasn't mad yet. Jack and I looked at each other and we decided to stick around to see what Frank was gonna do. The other kids had gone on ahead of us, but we didn't have much to do, so we waited.

Frank, mumbling to himself walked over to Cleveland's barn and came back with some bailing wire. The trace chain was broken right by the mules rear end. Frank sat down on one of the rows he was plowing and began the task of repairing the trace chain. The mule not knowing when or when not to switch his tail, hit Frank in the face twice before he caught it. He put the hairs in his mouth to hold 'em long enough for the repair work. Jack and I were watching this and wondering what was

gonna happen next. You guessed it ... the mule tried to switched its tail and the hair slipped outta Frank's mouth, cutting his lip. We started to snicker, but believe you me, Frank wasn't snickering at all.

Now we knew he was mad. He slowly stood up and walked up to the side of that mule and hit it in the belly with his fist as hard as he could. His fist looked like the size of a virginia ham. We stopped snickering, 'cause now we were scared. That mule let out a sound when Frank hit it that I've never heard before, and went to its knees. I don't know what end the sound came from, but it was loud. Frank unhitched the mule and grabbed the bridle and told the mule to get up and get your blankity, blankity, blank to the stable. The old mule slowly got up with a little prodding from Frank and the two of them headed toward Cleveland's barn. Jack and I started walking home laughing as hard as we have ever laughed. Of course, we were out of ear shot from Frank. It's too bad the other kids were so far ahead of us 'cause they didn't see what happened and to this day I don't think they or anyone else believes it was true.

Jack and I stopped telling the story shortly after it happened. Everyone thought we were making it up. I do tell it to my grandchildren once in awhile just to see the tears running down their cheeks from laughter. You guys and gals from Down East believe it, don't you?

My wife Marge and I try to come back to Carteret County every so often and this year we are bringing our daughter Carolyn and her husband Bob with us. She wants to see where her roots began. Maybe, just maybe, after some steamed oysters and corn bread, they too will learn to love the sights and sounds of Down East living.

Ruth, get the collards, cornmeal dumplings and mullets ready ... I'm coming home!

(Note: I had the privilege of having lunch with Clarence and his family while they were home in October. What a joy it was to watch Clarence beam with pride over all the "little things" about Down East. We took his family to Shell Point and told them about the Indians. Clarence told them about going fishing down off Lennoxville with his Mama. We rode around the Island and stopped by Mr. Norman's and got them a decoy to take back with them ... I personally wish they had not been in such a hurry. California time moves much faster, and to enjoy Down East you just have to slow the pace a little. So I invite you folks to come on back, but next time leave your watches home. There's so much more to tell you about ... KWA)

Cape Lookout Journal

For those of us who remember Cape Lookout "before the park service," Sally and Les Moore were a part of our memories of visits and stays at the Cape. Their life there was one we all envied ... and respected ... and wished could have continued. "Progress" would not allow that, so their business and life there would have to change. However, because of Sally's love for the Cape and her vision to record what she had learned from her years there, we can learn as well. Now, some twenty years later, the stories she has retold are even more important and precious.

The *Mailboat* is HONORED to include her work in our publication. A very special thanks to Mr. Les Moore who has offered to share these articles with us. We hope to reprint several of these published works as well as other material that has not been available before. We only wish Sally was here today ... continuing her efforts to preserve, record and "keep alive" the beauty of Cape Lookout. She is missed ... by all of us.

When the U-Boats Hit Cape Lookout

(Reprinted from *The State*, April 15, 1968)

When the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor December 7, 1941 and World War II was declared, not only on Japan but also Germany, the German Navy ordered its submarine wolfpack to American shores, and they picked the North Carolina coast as their hunting grounds.

The United States was totally unprepared for this maneuver, and the German U-Boats created havoc with maritime shipping. They struck first in January, 1942, in the Cape Hatteras to Cape Lookout area. By early March the Germans realized they were in control; and during the spring of 1942, of the 74 known sinkings of tankers and freighters along the entire coast of North Carolina, 52 occurred in the Cape Hatteras-Cape Lookout area.

Millions of dollars worth of valuable cargoes were destroyed, and hundreds of lives lost. Men were burned to death, drowned, eaten by sharks, and many times the German submarines would surface and machine-gun any survivors.

From Hatteras to Lookout, almost every night the residents along the coast would hear the explosions, and out over the ocean they could see the red glow in the night sky of one, two or three ships burning. The Situation was very, very critical; and fearing panic, the government did not let the public know how serious conditions were.

Much of the Outer Banks was isolated, without bridges and roads. On the mainland the small villages were miles apart, separated by low, swampy deserted land. The residents didn't know what to expect and would not have been surprised at an invasion; possibly any minute they were going to be evacuated

from their homes and sent inland, but they did not panic. Their only immediate hope was the National Guard, which ordered troops to the North Carolina coast, and set up temporary bases along the Outer Banks. These troops constantly patrolled along the edge of the ocean, and were on the alert for almost anything.

With trained personnel to meet the emergency sadly lacking, the government quickly organized special groups of citizens to fill the gap. Volunteer civilian airplane pilots came from all over the state, and were formed into a volunteer group known as the Civil Air Patrol (CAP); and during the first months of the war, they were our only air force along the coast. They deserve a great deal of credit for their hours in the air, and their untiring efforts, with equipment that certainly was not qualified for the stress and strain of constant patrol. They did a remarkable job and gave the local people a certain amount of comfort, but everyone realized it was inadequate.

Beaufort Airport was born at that time, and has survived as the only commercial airport in the county today.

The commercial and charter boat skippers were contacted and organized into a volunteer group called the Eastern Sea Frontier, in which they were used as "Confidential Observers in Atlantic Waters: to report any unusual activity. Many of the small pleasure boatmen joined the Home Guard, and came under the command of the Navy. They were sent on patrol and some became so frightened they joined the Army, and were glad to do so. Local boatmen were hired to transport troops and tons of equipment to the Outer Banks.

The underwater attacks became so numerous and severe off-shore that the entire coastline was ordered blacked out. Still the U-Boats were successful. Freighters and tankers were prime targets, and bunker oil covered our shoreline. Even our wildlife became casualties. Thousands of our shore birds became trapped and died in the oil that came ashore.

Amid all this confusion and turmoil, troops were ordered to be stationed to defend Cape Lookout Bight. A submarine net was strung across the entrance to Cape Lookout, and a small army base set up on shore. The plans called for two big guns (155 mm rifles, commonly called Long Toms, weight approximately 6 1/2 tons), to be set up on land facing Beaufort Bar.

The day these guns arrived, the Army with all confidence loaded them and transported them to Cape Lookout. In the meantime, the contractors had poured concrete gun emplacements on top of a range of hills. Concrete ammunition storage rooms had been installed, and all that was needed were the guns. The guns were unloaded from a landing barge without too much difficulty, and then came the job of getting them to the top of that range of hills. This was where the Army ran into trouble.

They hitched their caterpillar tractors to pull those guns, but the sand held them fast. They brought over bulldozers, put one in front and one in back. The guns dug in even deeper. Nothing the army tried would move them through the sand. Men sweated, cursed, swore and finally gave up, protesting "Hell couldn't move those guns."

During all this struggle, some of the local workmen kept saying that they were going to have to get Denard Davis from the nearby village of Davis; that if Denard couldn't get them up those hills then there was no need of trying further.

Davis to the Rescue

Beaufort Bar and Cape Lookout Bight had to be defended, and those guns had to be placed on top of those hills. Ships were already pulling into Lookout Bight, hoping for a little protection before they had to round Hatteras. Finally, some of the top officials decided to see just what Denard Davis could do, so he was contacted. Denard believed he could do it, and would certainly try.

The day Denard Davis landed at the Cape to start work on the guns was one to remember. A lot of the soldiers snickered, and some laughed outright. Denard had arrived with one anchor (which is called a deadman), some block and tackle, four house tacks, a few rollers, blocks and boards, a homemade capstan that looked as if it would fall apart if you touched it, and a few [black men] for helpers.

Unmindful of the snickers, Denard Davis went to work. First he placed his capstan up a small hill, strung his block and tackle from his capstan to one of those guns and buried his deadman, then he jacked those big guns up, slipped boards and rollers under them, placed his crew on the handle of the dilapidated capstan, and they started their march around and around. Slowly, inch by inch, those big guns began to roll.

It was slow and tedious work, but with calm and uncompaining endurance Denard kept that crew working; hour after hour, guiding them every inch of the way. Being still skeptical, those same soldiers asked Denard if he were going to use a "sky hook" to get the guns over the three foot wall around the gun emplacements. With a pitiable glance at his hecklers, Denard took his boards and blocks and patiently built a ramp up and over. Slowly, the sneers and snickers changed to grudging admiration as up those hills and over the wall those big guns went. After about two weeks they were in place, and both facing directly towards Beaufort Bar, which is the direction the enemy would have to come from to enter Cape Lookout Bight.

The Army kept Denard Davis busy from then on. He placed the guns around Fort Macon, and later the Coast Guard even acquired his services to move Bogue Inlet Station onto a barge, then across Bogue Sound and ashore on the mainland. He was a good man to have around during an emergency.

After several months, the United States was armed well enough to cope with the situation, and our Coast Guard and Navy were supplied with sufficient boats and personnel to patrol the area; also, the giant marine bases of Cherry Point and Camp Lejeune were started, and temporary runways installed so that places could be brought in to patrol the area, thus giving some relief to the Civil Air Patrol. The Eastern Sea Frontier kept a

watchful eye on our inshore waters during the entire war and earned the gratitude of the coastal population. The Home Guard was absorbed into the Army and Navy.

The war finally ended, and evidently the Army had no desire to try and salvage those guns, because almost twenty years later they are still keeping a silent vigil, aimed straight at Beaufort Bar. Children played over them; little girls looked at them with awe and little boys blowing up a submarine head in Beaufort Bar; fishermen used them as landmarks and they were an ever silent reminder to the local people of how close the war had come to their door.

But finally, said to tell, some junk dealers found out the guns were still there. In March and early April of 1961, they came with their portable cutting torches; and since there was no one to stop them, they cut those big guns in pieces and hauled them away.

These were probably the only guns of that size to be abandoned along the North Carolina coast. In years to come they would have been relics of historical value, but the Almighty Dollar came first.

Twenty-six years later, the Civil Air Patrol still survives and is talked of occasionally in this area; most people never even heard of the Eastern Sea Frontier; and Denard Davis is still moving anything that others say "Hell couldn't move" with the same old capstan, deadman, and house jacks, and the same calm and uncomplaining endurance. Most of the Outer Banks in Carteret County is still deserted land, without bridges and roads. On the mainland, the same road goes by the same little villages. Cape Lookout Bight is still a haven for ships.

About Sally and Les ...

"Little Stories About Business" by W. B. Wright (Reprinted from *The State*, August 1, 1966)

World Enough

Everywhere you went in Carteret County folks were jubilant over prospects for the Cape Lookout National Seashore Park, and mental cash registers had already started tote the harvest of a new tourist influx.

But in his little shop over on The Cape, Les Moore told us, "That's the day this place will be for sale."

Les and Sally Moore are the total year-around population of Cape Lookout, which may seem to be a only existence -- but not to the Moores. Several vacation cottages have been built in the surrounding dunes; and every vacation season brings increasing traffic of campers, picnickers and excursionists. Scarcely a mob, you understand, but enough that sometimes their shop get uncomfortably busy.

Even during the winter months -- or, perhaps, especially then -- when a few coast guardsmen are the only handy humans, life is far from dull for the Moores.

It was early spring when Captain Joe Bailey deposited our little party at the dock in front of the Moore's place. While Sally fixed coffee and sandwiches for the crowd she told us about the whale that had washed ashore, and how they had nursed a stranded porpoise back to swimming strength last winter.

D _ _ _ _ Buffaloes

Laughton Willis

D _ _ _ _ Buffaloes

Now gather 'round me men and boys,
I'll have you all to know;
I won't be drug to Hatteras
By no damn Buffalo.

Our sail was torn from cleat to clew,
The spirit it did come down;
Say boys, carry me ashore
Before we all are drowned.

And when we got to Shingle Creek,
Poor Bosh was almost dead;
A sayin' "Boys kill me a sparrow
To eat with my cold bread."

And when we got to Portsmouth town,
There Sergeant Styron we met;
A sayin' "Boys it is cold weather
Besides, you are quite wet.

Now, you don't want to see me,
So back to the hospital I goes;
For you're being drug to Hatteras
By we damn Buffaloes."

Well, early the next mornin'
Captain Simmons he arose;
And while a standin' in Simmons' door
I spied damn Buffaloes.

I says, "You all can go back to the hospital,
For home I'm bound to go;
I won't be drug to Hatteras
By no damn Buffalo."

JAMES WARREN DAY

(1833-1872)

Among the handful of old local songs that have passed into Cedar Island lore is the Civil War tune, "Damn Buffaloes," by James Warren Day. This song, penned in the "down east" dialect of the time and handed down orally to later generations, is a genuine folk ballad; it breaks naturally into seven narrative stanzas, each with a repeated simple melody. The song is undated but very likely was composed soon after the events it describes.

Of course, there exists the possibility that the song is merely a fiction, improvised long ago for some local amusement; its

subtly mocking tone easily could have been given voice to by an old sore-loser. Yet, students of folklore claim that many elements of oral culture have an historical, truthful basis; "Damn Buffaloes" may likewise ring true given some facts about its author.

Warren Day was a son of the island's Irish Day family. His immigrant grandparents, John and Amelia Day, had settled on Harbor Island in the 1790s, and by 1820 the growing Day clan had spread onto Cedar Island along the shores of old Hog Island Bay. Warren himself grew up during the antebellum years on the island's eastern, Lola end.

Except for the Civil War era, he lived at Lola and was occupied variously as a seasoned boatman, occasional fiddle player and sometime songwriter. Today, his descendants still live near the original bayside homestead, the oldest continuously inhabited site on Lola to remain in one family. (The crumbled foundations of Warren Day's own house eroded into the bay years ago.)

Warren moved across the bay to Hog Island shortly before the outbreak of war. He and his wife, Sally, lived there in an old house they had purchased near the busy little fishing village of Lupton; Sally was the island's midwife and dispensed folk remedies and medicines for the less serious illnesses. Warren, like many of the villagers, seasonally turned from mullet fishing to oyster tonging and, late in the year, perhaps to waterfowl hunting. This assorted bounty was processed with the help of wives and children, then sailed inland to the few available markets.

Hog Island in those days was relatively prosperous; there was a small school at Lupton and various stores and scattered net houses. The island boasted its own schooner-building facility, and in 1869 the 41-foot schooner *Agnes* was built there, followed by the 1871 construction of 38-foot *Emeline*. The island's small, though bustling anchorage is said to have harbored its share of the many sailing craft that once plied the sounds, and there is tell of a small "forest" of ship's masts in Shell Cove at the island's eastern shore.

Portsmouth, however, was the area's real center of trade and commerce. This crowded and busy wartime depot of shipping and wounded, even though held by Federal troops, drew nearby tradesmen seeking needed products of the industrial North. Equally sought after were reports on the war's general progress and information about the Union's local operations. On the other hand, as a Yankee outpost, Portsmouth was a terminus for officially processing native miscreants and malcontents or any Rebs caught abetting the enemy.

Shingle Creek is on the upper, north end of Ocracoke Island and is actually a small cove opening into Pamlico Sound. The sea-swept area there has long been deserted, with the exception of an occasional fish camp. It is unknown whether or

not this end of Ocracoke was a refuge for smugglers and runners of contraband and arms during the Civil War; yet, Hatteras Inlet was just a few handy miles northeast, and unlike Ocracoke Inlet down at Portsmouth, was not as closely watched by Union patrols.

The Cedar Island boatmen came "to Portsmouth town" during the period when local men were being shanghaied, or "drug" to Hatteras. One hundred years later, a grandson of his stated that Warren Day was one of those "taken to Hatteras." The song's opening stanza, however, sounds an unmistakable note of avowed, stubborn resistance to this fate. Whatever the mens' ports of call along the Outer Banks, the impression is strongly given that Hatteras was never one of them. The song does raise the question of where exactly the men were sailing to.

Now, many of the large boats which sailed downeast waters during this time were a type of two-masted, fore-and-aft-rigged schooner; later adaptations were known locally as sharpies. There is no knowing, though, what was the precise configuration of Warren's boat, but there are some clues in the following scenario based on his song.

While sailing to the Banks, Warren Day and crew ran into foul cold weather bearing down on them out of Pamlico Sound. The men had little time to come about and heave to and so were struck amidships by the Pamlico's infamous, fierce winds. While the sudden gale whipped spray and rain slickly over the pitching deck, the men tightly grasped wheel and rudder to keep from yawing dangerously near the shoals along the Banks.

Then, a blast ripped one of the sails. Snapping violently in the wind, this sail now tore all the way from its clew at the lower aft corner, to its edge, or luff, located forward near the wooden cleats on the mast. The crew was helpless as the furious winds and the flapping sail yanked the ropes from the cleats which had kept the spirit's rigging from slipping. The spirit--and the fore-and-aft-rigged sail--then came crashing to the deck.

The crew probably managed to secure and bestow this writhing heap before further damage could be done, but without its spritsail, their fore-and-after was out of control. If they were driven onto the shoals, Warren indeed might have feared, "we all are drowned." Swashing, heaving waves first would have lifted, then heavily dropped the vessel's keel shuddering onto the sands below.

Still, Warren's plea to "carry me ashore" may have been only rhetorical. At some point, though, the crew either got out and struggled to shore and to Shingle Creek, or else they managed to put in there and make repairs. How else to get to Ocracoke Inlet and over to Portsmouth?

Of course, the boat's damage may be overstated in the song, doubtlessly for humorous effect. This is suggested by the third stanza's comic account of "Poor Bosh" Styron, who even though "almost dead," seems to have been rather peculiarly concerned with "a sparrow to eat with my cold bread." Now imagine. There they were: at lonely Shingle Creek, wrecked and nearly drowned. And Bosh Styron's only worry? Nary a thing to eat but cold bird biscuits!

The song does not answer the question of why Warren Day and company came to Portsmouth, nor why they came first to

Shingle Creek. Did the storm blow them off their Cedar Island-Portsmouth course and up to Shingle Creek? Or had the latter been their destination from the beginning, and if so, why? The men definitely had Confederate sympathies, and their presence at either location could have been perilous. Did the Yankees just drag anybody off to Hatteras; or only those caught at some mischief? Warren's audience probably knew all these answers and explanatory passages would have been unnecessary. Thus, the song offers no direct clues, and any attempted answers must be taken as speculation.

So, let me make a speculation and it's this: Warren Day conceivably may have been running guns into Shingle Creek if guns were run in barrels. This is a wild conclusion, I know, but one suggested by a very probably, completely and totally unrelated tidbit. In 1885, the heirs of Richard B. Styron, a neighbor of the Days', sold land nearby that ran "East to an old gun barrel in Sallie Day's line." Perhaps this odd landmark was merely an old rifle barrel stuck into the ground for a property marker. Or, perhaps it was an old oaken "gun barrel" sunk into the ground and used as a watering trough for livestock. In any case, this enigmatic reference is unique among the landmarks named in Cedar Island deeds.

As has been mentioned, Union officers abducted locals to Hatteras. Warren improvised his ballad around this outrageous practice but with an amusing twist to perhaps ostensibly bolster morale or to provide much needed humor at "get-together" occasions. Indeed, the ballad at first glance seems to be mere tongue-in-cheek jest. But there may be a deeper level in the song.

Because his composition in fact utilized local surnames in connection with "Buffaloes," Warren's intent was possibly a serious one and not simply fun-loving jest. It is told that in the dangerous days of bitter defeat following the war, one risked much to deride those locals who had joined-up with the Yankees. Too often, these "turncoats" wielded the reims of repression; yet the imperative to remember--often through mockery--remained strong.

Now, there are numerous down east candidates for the identity of "Sergeant Styron." Local records narrow the likely culprits to two Civil War residents of Portsmouth, but the issue remains unresolved. One thing does seem clear, though, about the Sergeant: he must have been famous for understating the obvious, especially when greeting soaked, shivering sailors by "a sayin': "Boys, it is cold weather; besides you are quite wet."

There is little question that "Captain Simmons" was James Simmons, a Portsmouth mariner and a descendant of an old Hog Island family. Simmons settled in Beaufort after the war and married a Confederate widow, Mary Ireland, granddaughter of Daniel Ireland, the local, colorful Revolutionary War veteran.

And, of course, "Poor Bosh" was Abisha Styron, a Lola native and Warren's first cousin. Late in 1861, Bosh's younger brother, James N. Styron (CSA), died at Fort Macon, one of the very few Carteret County sons to have been a casualty there. If Warren composed "Damn Buffaloes" after his young cousin's death, an added dimension of meaning for the song's old

Lukens Post Office

Bill Mason

About 1900, William Lukens came to South River from a small town, Plymouth Meeting near Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He bought a lot of timber land on the west side of South River and built a large sawmill at Hardy's Creek. George Hardy told me he helped them build the mill when he was fourteen years old.

Lukens got his brother-in-law, Arthur Thatcher to come to South River and run their company store. They also got the post office started on May 23, 1902, about a month before my birthday on June 21, and named the post office Lukens, for William Lukens.

Arthur Thatcher, was the first Postmaster. He was Postmaster until 1912 when the mill closed and he moved back to Pennsylvania. Martin Goodwin was appointed Postmaster on June 26, 1912, John Hardy kept the post office for Martin Goodwin and did not move it from Hardy's Creek.

About 1910, the women around South River started ordering things from Sears Roebuck and some other mail order houses, and began to use money orders. John Hardy did not want to write money orders, he had rather go fishing. Money orders were more complicated then, than they are now. So, Martin Goodwin and John Hardy got Joseph Mason to move the Lukens Post Office over on the east side of South River, with the consent of the Third Asst. Postmaster General, who appointed Joseph C. Mason Postmaster on September 8, 1913.

On September 3rd, a bad hurricane came and washed Joe's home away. He had it built out over the water so he could run his boat right to his home. Joe Mason then went up on some high land about 100 yards from the river, so some land he had bought from the Roper Lumber Company and started him a new home.

Then he thought about John Hardy going to bring him the post office things on September 8th, so he went on the south side of the yard, where he was building his new home, put down four cedar posts, about four feet apart, and built a little house, four feet square, and three feet off the ground, for the post office things. They did not use many things at that time, a stamper and letter boxes for the different families. That was the smallest post office I ever saw. I helped him build it. I was eleven years old, but I could hand him tools, and hold boards for him to nail. He used cedar posts to keep the bugs and ants away, for he used the little house for his milkhouse for over 25 years after Henry Banks took the post office.

Henry T. Banks had promised Joe Mason that he would take the post office as soon as he could get a room for it built in the end of his store. Henry T. Banks was appointed Postmaster on February 26, 1916, and Joe moved the post office things up to Henry Banks' Store, about one third of a mile from his place. They only had the family name on the post office boxes at that

time. Like, Henry Banks' Family, and Joe Mason's Family, etc. There were sixteen families on the east side of South River, twelve on the west side, and eight at Brown's Creek.

Henry Banks kept the post office for over 28 years, until July 26, 1944, when he died and the people all moved away from the east side of South River. All they use there now is the South River Cemetery, but it is still a pretty place.



Mr. Bill's "new" Lukens Post Office, built in 1991 with the same type materials, dimensions, and construction. Pictured here with Mr. Bill Mason (front and center) from the left, Jack Mason (Joe Mason's grandson), Amy and Anita Tingle (Mr. Bill's granddaughters), and Nellie Banks Norman (Henry Banks daughter).

The Mailboat

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"A Collection of Coastal Carolina Memories"

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Typesetting/Layout: Joel Grant Hancock

Printing: Herald Printing Company

Contributing writers, photographers and resources noted throughout. Reprints used by permission.

Our thanks to all who contribute their time, talents and memories to each issue of *The Mailboat*. Special thanks to Josiah Bailey for proofreading.

This publication is the result of a cumulative effort of many individuals working to preserve the rich heritage of coastal North Carolina. We welcome your comments, suggestions, and ideas.

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Hurricane Memories

From "Not So Long Ago" and "Not So Far Away"

(Brought to **The Mailboat** by Edith Pigott whose niece lived this nightmare. Mary White's mother is Denie Gillikin from Bettie daughter of McDonald Gillikin, a fisherman up and down the east coast and originally from Carteret County. His sisters are Edith Pigott and Dolena Bell of Beaufort. This story is reprinted from **The Atlanta Journal** and was written by Billy Bowles.)

McClellanville, SC - As they huddled on the roof at the height of Hurricane hugo, protected by the branches of a fallen tree, the only member of Mary White's family who wasn't crying was the baby.

Rising flood waters had driven the family to the roof, and it looked for a while as if they might not get there. With the little one-story house chin-deep in water, Denie White, Mary's mother, had swum through the kitchen window clutching her 12-week-old grandson, Cameron.

"My mother tried to baptize the baby up there on the roof, doing the best job she could," said Mary, as she spent Sunday dry and safe, inspecting the damage done to this sleepy fishing village by the massive storm.

The White family's ordeal began early Friday morning.

"We were reading magazines in the living room," said Mary, 22, a senior at the College of Charleston 40 miles south of here. "Then we heard what sounded like a faucet turned on. My sister said, 'My feet are getting wet.'"

Mary said they thought the water was the driving rain that had been lashing the house for hours.

"But we opened the door, and the water was waist deep within five seconds," she said. "We just grabbed the baby, who was asleep on the bed, grabbed the baby, who was asleep on the bed, grabbed our dog, Rambo, and carried them up into the attic."

It wasn't long before they decided the attic wasn't safe, either. "We could see the water was getting higher and higher and higher," Mary said, "and we could see there was no escape from the attic at all. We tried to break out of the attic to try to get on the roof, but the outside was brick."

The only way was down the ladder from the attic to the rising flood waters, she said.

"We swam out the kitchen window," Mary said. "We left the dog in the attic. Outside was a pump house, but as soon as we stood on it, it broke loose and was floating. My brother, Gary, got up on the roof first, and he pulled the rest of us up."

They scrambled up the pitched roof to the side protected somewhat from the wind.

"A tree had fallen on our roof, and we got under it," Mary said. "It protected us. My father said the wind had to be 170 or 180 miles an hour. I mean it sounded like a freight train."

Others in McClellanville insisted the wind there exceeded 150 miles an hour, but officials of the U. S. Weather Service in

Charleston, where the eye of Hugo passed, said they estimated it to be 130 to 135 miles an hour.

They could not be certain, however, because the winds broke the wind gauges.

"We were up on the roof 2 1/2 hours," Mary said.

With her were her father, Farrell, her mother, brother Gary and his wife, Yvette, and their baby.

"We formed ourselves in a square, with the baby in the middle. We all said the Lord's Prayer."

After the wind died down, and the waters started to recede, the family made its way through the flood water and returned to the attic.

"We're incredibly lucky," said Mary, who intends to become an elementary school teacher. "All my possessions were gone, but I didn't care."



The harbor at McClellanville



A neighbor's house in McClellanville

Book Review

1991 Boat Books ...

1991 must be the year for "boat books!" Over the past several months **The Mailboat** has received copies of three different publications devoted to boats on North Carolina's coast.

Traditional Work Boats of North Carolina (written by Michael B. Alford, Curator of Historical Maritime Research and published by the North Carolina Maritime Museum) offers a very basic overview of boat types, styles and purposes along the North Carolina coast. It is geared to novice boatmen and students, providing them with a brief description, easy to understand glossary and line drawings to help identify boat types and uses. This booklet should be very helpful to teachers for classroom use or newcomers to the coastal region.

Small Craft Advisory: A Book About the Building of a Boat (by Louis D. Rubin, Jr. and published by Atlantic Monthly Press) is a totally different "boat book." It is a very entertaining account of the joys and adventures of owning a "pleasure" boat. (A boat not needed to provide food for the table.) Many of the boats, adventures and people included in these tales are local, making it even more meaningful and colorful for those of us familiar with the people and places. (A full review will be published in a later edition of **The Mailboat**.)

However, the book that cannot be overlooked -- especially for anyone with ties to Carteret County -- is the smallest book of the three. **Little Boats: Making Ship Models on the North Carolina Coast** (Charles (Terry) G. Zug, III, Professor of English, UNC-Chapel Hill, and published by the North Carolina Folklore Society and the North Carolina Maritime Museum) is a true treasure. It is a look at four of Carteret County's finest craftsmen and their art of model making. Ed O'Neal and Joe Fulcher of Morehead City and James Allen Rose and Stevie Lewis of Harkers Island are both the subjects and resources for this informative and totally enjoyable book.

Though I am not qualified to judge or critique any book for its literary, technical or interpretive significance, I do believe I can address Dr. Zug's effort to record the story of "little boats." Being a typical Harkers Islander myself, I am by nature and by conditioning skeptical of "somebody from somewhere else" down here trying to "figure us out." Most of those who come through here (usually looking for "grant money ideas") learn everything they think they need to know in two weekends ... but have no idea WHERE THEY ARE - let alone understand it well enough to write about it. I have read too many articles, dissertations, interpretive studies, etc., etc., that when I finished reading I felt as if I had read about some other people from somewhere else. I could not make the connection with what "they had seen" and what "I have lived with" all my life. Not so, with **Little Boats**.

This book gives life to its subject. Even though the topic is "little boats" the stories are about the men who built these boats, their lives, their talents, and the pride they have in their

work. The appreciation and respect of the writer for each of these builders and their boats is evident throughout. He allows them to tell their story in their own words. The photographs are realistic and add much to relating an enjoyable and informative study of what these model boats represent.

I wish I knew Mr. O'Neal and Mr. Fulcher personally, but only know them from their work and what I have read; but James Allen and Stevie are a different story -- they're almost family. I KNOW the love they have for their craft, the knowledge of boats and working on the water they possess, and the skills they have worked to refine. This book reflects all of those elements. Dr. Zug's work makes me even prouder (if that's possible) to be from Harkers Island and a part of the community that produces people like Stevie and James Allen. It is so reassuring to know there are individuals of Dr. Zug's position who are willing to take the time to understand the importance of crafts like "little boatbuilding" and the lifestyle they symbolize.

The Mailboat extends a special thanks to Dr. Zug for his willingness to devote time and research to publishing **Little Boats**. It is our hope that other professionals in the field of cultural history, folklore and other preservation efforts will take the time to carefully understand the importance of this work, not only to those who might read it, but also to the boat builders.

I will close with an excerpt from the book:

"Boats are everywhere throughout this region, and they appear in all forms and sizes. The large boats first catch the eye, the actual skiffs and trawlers and headboats that see daily use, but yet another type of vessel appears all over Harkers Island and Morehead. Walk into a restaurant, a fish market, an art gallery, a home, and there sits a miniature trawler on a shelf or mantel, boldly painted and sporting a full set of nets, trawl doors, and fish baskets ... But it was not until I met one of the builders that I recognized the full extent and significance of these model boats."

*Note: A very limited number of **Little Boat** books are available at the NCMM bookstore. If you would like to add this to your collection of Carteret County books, and are unable to purchase copies at the Museum bookstore, please contact **The Mailboat** and we will forward a copy to you. (Price is \$4.95 + \$1.00 s/h)*

Continued from page 22

Les said he would show us around, and we mounted his beach buggy, an ancient A-model with 2 wooden benches fixed behind and above the driver's seat. The rush-crusted engine, shaded only by a plywood canopy, was viewed with some apprehension by the ladies; but after Les had coaxed several preliminary coughs from it, his durable machine took off across the dunes as if it had a will of its own, after straining but never discouraged by the drifted sands.

A rabbit jumped from somewhere and ran ahead of us, looking very small and embarrassed at the last of cover. Shouting above the engine's clatter, Les told us there were rabbits aplenty and an abundance of coons in the swampy section of the island.

He took us to an area back from the beach where he had planted some trees, spindly and lonesome in the barren landscape-- but growing. Some day they would form a pleasant oasis of shade. He stopped to show us where Sally had successfully planted sea oats to stabilize the sand. We reckoned the erosion engineers could learn something from the Moores.

At the lighthouse we lingered a while as Les told us all about its height and history, how it was built, how it operated. It wasn't chamber of commerce talk -- more like a fellow showing you over his family plantation.

Later, as we approached the pointed land's end, huge flock of sea birds, seemingly thousands of them were gathered on the beach in a crowded mass which, we felt certain, would explode in noisy flight as the car approached. But Les eased up on the accelerator and gently stopped; and for several minutes we stayed quietly watching the birds, then finally slipped away without raising a feather among them.

Cape Lookout is a spot made-to-order for the likes of Les and Sally Moore. She is the daughter of a Carteret fishing boat skipper, and has loved the sea and all about it for as long as she remembers. Les, by contrast, comes from the Midwest, about as far from the ocean as you can get, a fact which he dismisses with the simple explanation that he was "born a long way from home."

The winds and waters and sands of Cape Lookout are world enough for them. Sally takes the boat over to Harkers Island to buy groceries and pick up supplies for the shop about once a week. But Les leaves The Cape only when he needs a haircut, maybe once a month.

When we first knew of them, the Moores had a modest motel, one of the early ones, at Atlantic Beach. It was then a relatively quiet community where scarcely more than a dozen residents regularly remained after the vacation people had gone home. When the community took a growing spurt and got a little too crowded for Les and Sally, they escaped to Cape Lookout.

So don't blame Les if he gets a little uneasy when mainlanders start talking about how the National Seashore Park is going to help this place develop.

He would hate to have to move again.

Continued from page 24

audience emerges. This speculation (at least) becomes especially germane if a close familial connection can be established for the contending Styrons.

Finally, there is strong evidence in the song that indeed light-heartedness was not its underlying purpose. There are possible racial overtones in the repeated reference to Union soldiers as "Buffaloes." Very likely, this epithet was in allusion to the Black Buffaloes, a Federal troop of colored volunteers; even had the Black Buffaloes been stationed at Portsmouth, it is significant that the slur is directed to white officers. In the final stanza, Warren ominously seems to menace these officers with the threat to go "to the hospital," ending with his reiterated vow not to be dragged off "by no damn Buffalo."

After the war, Warren returned to his old Lola home. His widowed mother, Elizabeth Fulcher Day, had died in the war's aftermath, and the Day home place had stood empty. A younger brother, Benjamin, arrested on minor charges during Reconstruction, disappeared from Cedar Island, his fate unknown.

In this deplorable era Warren himself died, only months after his land on Cedar Island had been confiscated. Sally traveled to Beaufort during her husband's illness and managed to repurchase at public auction some of the extensive Day land. She paid only ten dollars for the property, but an anecdote handed down from those hard times suggests the Days' could ill afford this sum. It is told that when a few of the women from up the bay came to lay Warren out in his coffin, they could find nothing fit in the house upon which to lay his head. One of the women removed her apron, and it was this which adorned his bier.

James Warren Day, aged 39, was buried in the Lupton Cemetery on Lola. For many years, there was no permanent marker where he lay, but at Sally's death in 1906, matching headstones were erected at their grave sites. His defiant, old Civil War ballad, handed down in various Cedar Island families, survived; and as far as can be known, Warren Day never was drug to Hatteras by no damn Buffalo.

(Research courtesy Lucille Goodwin Willis and Jenny Davis.)

Note: When my mother came across the song in the 1960s, it was known informally as the buffalo song. I believe "Damn Buffaloes" may more closely reflect Warren Day's original, lost title.

Christmas Announcements and Shopping Notes

Beaufort Historical Association

Victorian Christmas music and a drawing for an Alan Cheek watercolor print of the Beaufort waterfront are among the many attractions planned for the Beaufort Historical Association's Christmas celebration at the Beaufort Historic Site on Saturday, December 14, from 2 to 4 pm.

Six historic buildings will be open to the public free of charge and each will be decorated appropriate to the period of construction. The Association's vintage English-style double-decker bus will take guests on a narrated tour of the Beaufort Historic District at 10 am and 2 pm. Bus tours are \$5 per person. Please call 728-5225 for reservations.

Old Christmas - Portsmouth Island

On Sunday, January 5th the **Friends of Portsmouth** and **The Mailboat** will bring together an "Old Christmas Celebration" at the Methodist Church on Portsmouth. Plans for the day will include a worship service in the church and time to visit with former Portsmouth residents, members of Portsmouth families, and others who love and appreciate the beauty of this community of Core Banks.

Transportation will be offered from Ocracoke through **The Friends and The Mailboat**. Those attending from Carteret County would need to take the earliest ferry available (7 am) from Cedar Island and will meet at Ocracoke for boat transportation across to Portsmouth. Others are welcome to come by private boat. If you are interested in attending, please contact **The Friends or The Mailboat** as soon as possible. Transportation from Ocracoke will be limited to the number the boats available and the amount of time we have to get back and forth. In case of bad weather, we will hold services and still "Celebrate Old Christmas" at another site, possibly Ocracoke or Cedar Island.

Please call if you would like to be included in this occasion. The experience of sharing in this tradition will be worth every problem we will have to solve in getting there! Let us know ASAP. We will be sending our information within the next few weeks to remind you that we can help with your holiday shopping.

Nature Calendar Published

Karen Baggott of Morehead City has recently published, through Mount Olive College Press, a 15-month calendar for 1992. The calendar is entitled "Within Arm's Reach - a Contemplation of nature in words and photographs" and includes black & white photographs from Bogue Banks to Cliffs of the Neuse to the mountains. Accompanying poetry describes thoughts and feelings evoked by the images - some whimsical, some sympathetic to the state of the environment, and some just sharing a sense of being there. The calendars are available in gift shops and bookstores throughout the calendar, or directly from Ms. Baggott at 208 N. 8th Street, Morehead City, NC (Price: \$10.00 which includes tax and postage).

Shopping Reminders

All books offered in the **Coastlore Trader** are still available. There are several books that have been published this year that are also included in our collection. If you have title you would like to purchase, please contact us, and we will be happy to locate, wrap and ship it to you. PLEASE CALL.

"Core Sound Christmas Baskets!"

These baskets are a new idea from **The Mailboat** and will include items from Carteret County's past such as a homemade fish scaler, a hard-carved net needle, corks, shells, driftwood, a toy boat, a "whittled duck," an oyster knife a clothespin doll, a jar of apple butter, and the traditional "apple and orange" nuts and hard candy. Each basket will also include a copy of "Our Christmas Memories" the Christmas edition of **The Mailboat**. These will be great for folks from the county who live other places and get REAL HOMESICK around the holidays. Baskets tied with a big plaid bow will sell for \$32. This is just a "trial idea" for this year, so availability will be limited. Call us if you're interested at 728-4644.

Waterfowl and decoy prints

Beth Munden of Morehead City is pleased to announce the release of her 1991 waterfowl and decoy prints. The waterfowl print is a watercolor rendering of a mallard in flight. The decoy collection includes two sets of prints; one pair of 1930s canvas decoys (Swan and Canada Goose), and the other of antique wooden decoys (a 1905 Pintail and a 1915 Redhead.) These prints are available through **The Mailboat**. The prints and others (including pelicans, lighthouses, pen and inks) can be viewed at Munden Studio in Morehead City (726-8817).

Calendar Orders

Special note for calendar orders: For those of you who had planned to order a copy of **"The Sounds of Carolina's Coast,"** we regret to announce that we will be unable to publish a 1992 edition. Kerry (the photographer) and I discussed all the possibilities and decided that we felt it best to wait until we can guarantee the same quality printing and design as before. Hopefully in the very near future, our distribution area will be wide enough to warrant a printing large enough to financially support such a project. We look forward to publishing another calendar as we were very proud of the 1990 edition and want very much to share it with you again. If you have ordered copies, your money will be refunded. We hope you understand that our organization is small and growing, and at present all our resources and energies are concentrated on keeping **The Mailboat** running. When that project is secure, we will branch into new publishing ventures. With your help, we can share and preserve our heritage in books, calendars, and other publications for many years to come. Thank you for your patience.

Continued from page 15.

geons. In short, everything possible for the thorough treatment of patients has been done, the limitations being solely charged to financial considerations."

"Patients are now received from all over eastern North Carolina and the splendid success which has thus far attended the treatment of cases brought to the hospital is the highest tribute to the professional skill of its physicians and nurses. Much charity work has been done for the poorer class of patients and money profit has been of little moment to its founders and supporters."

Morehead City Hospital is an incorporated Company, its officers being: Charles E. Wallace, president, E. H. Gorham, vice president, Miss Edith Broadway, superintendent. The founders of the hospital were Doctors Ben F. Royal, William E. Headen, and K. P. B. Bonner."

Apparently the financial limitations still precluded the installation of an elevator. As always, patients were being admitted via the backs and in the arms of the physicians.

The late Mrs. L. J. Norris, Sr., daughter of Dr. Headen, recalls that second floor porch. As a small child, she crossed the street in front of her home to visit her father at the hospital and, as small children are wont to do, she walked around the porch on the outside of the railing with no regard to the dangers of falling to the ground below. "Miss Broadway caught me and she got me told. I didn't do that any more."

Miss Broadway recalled that by 1915, "our nursing staff had grown to seven or eight nurses and with these nurses, we were running a training school. The staff of teachers were Doctors Royal, Headen, Bonner and Nurse Broadway."

Miss Broadway described how in 1919, the hospital had to be evacuated because of a storm that blew off the roof. "On this night that we had to leave on account of the storm some of the patients were taken to Mr. Gorham's house and the home of Mr. I. E. Pittman. At this time, Mr. Gorham was chairman of the Hospital Board."

"Some of the patients were taken to the telephone office, some were taken to Mr. Gorham's office, and some patients were put on the floor. This was on a Saturday night just before dark; the patient's had just had their supper. Mrs. Gorham fed

all the patients being taken care of in her home, and had meals prepared for all patients who were 'camping' in the telephone office building and other places."

"Mr. James B. Willis, father of Mr. Durwood Willis, had just vacated his home which was next door to the Methodist Church, and on Sunday we rented this building where we carried on for two weeks. We had eight patients in the hospital when the storm came. After two weeks in the private homes, without any running water except what the nurses held in pails while they ran, we were mighty happy to get back into the Paragon Building, and stayed there until we moved into the brick building which was under construction at the time of the storm."

At the conclusion of her account, Nurse Broadway gave these somewhat sparse statistics: "Mrs. Tressa Royal Vickers was the second baby born at the hospital. The first baby was the child of a niece of Mrs. Stell Lincoln."

The lack of money and time-saving conveniences did not hamper the operation of this noble little hospital. For over seven years, the doctors and nurses cared for the injured, healed the sick and comforted the dying with single-minded devotion. The near-fatal flu epidemic of 1918, however, nearly devastated those courageous people; Dr. Royal collapsed and when finally, he was able to struggle up those stairs again, he found Nurse Edith Broadway carrying on as a nurse, doctor, cook and orderly, and with a temperature of 104 degrees.

Although the flu epidemic ended, it was obvious that should another such disaster occur, there simply was not enough space, beds or equipment to care for the desperately ill. It was time to hatch plans for a new hospital.

The writer is indebted to Mrs. Kenneth (Clate) Canfield of Morehead City for her kindness in sharing her mementos and memories of Miss Edith Broadway.

The next stories will be about the hospital on Shepherd Street on the waterfront in Morehead and Sea Level Hospital. There are more stories about Dr. Ben F. Royal and Nurse Broadway, Dr. K. P. B. Bonner and many others. I want to thank everyone who called with new names for me to contact.

Continued from page 31.

stupid, I know what the bathroom is called), I was consumed with the sole intention of getting to the toilet so that I could rid myself of whatever it was inside of my belly that was trying to poison me.

Now is any of you have ever been in the head of one of these commercial sportfishing boats, you are probably already laughing at my misfortune. For those of you that have not had this pleasure, believe me, it did not help matters.

back up top I joined the others in waiting for a stupid bite. I knew these guys would not quit until they had a fish safely in the cooler and more than anything in this world, I wanted to get my feet on solid ground.

As if an answer to my prayers, we hooked a fish and everyone came to life. Men scrambled with renewed vigor and

I, caught up in the excitement, grabbed my camera and maneuvered my way to the rail in order to capture this Kodak moment. Just as the fish drew close to the boat and just as I saw my picture materializing in front of me, by green nemesis came rushing back. Sorry boss, but no picture today! My head sent over the rail, along with my stomach. Wouldn't you know it, that was the only catch of the day. The real bummer is that I never did get to enjoy my lunch, and it did look so good.

So give me the cozy confines of Core Sound on a slick ca'm day -- or even the quiet peacefulness of an old wooden fishing dock. I'll leave the offshore stuff for the other guys, that is unless you just happen to need a photo-taking, fish-gaffing first mate. Just ask anyone, I'm one of the best.

Now THAT is a fish tale!

Hill's View

Eddie Hill

For those of you who know me, and even for those of you that only know me by way of my palavering reputation, it may seem strange to picture me at a loss for words. But folks, that's exactly what I was when our lovely do-everything editor-in chief informed me that this issue of the renowned, acclaimed and totally awesome *Mailboat* would center on fishing.

I guess my writing laryngitis was brought on by my no-sogolden track record when it comes to fishing. Now, don't get me wrong, when it come to good old Down East fishing, meaning lots of nets, I can basically do alright. It's the other kind of fishing that gives my fits. (You know, "dingbatter fishing" - hook-and-line, etc.) It seems a bit odd that I would run into difficulties in this area, especially when you consider the suspicious beginning that I had.

You see, I was one of the greatest cane pole fishermen that ever sat on the dock behind Tilmon's fish house. My cousin Quinn and I would ride down with my Granddaddy Leon, all loaded up with hooks, poles and bait, which consisted of anything from shrimp to bacon fat. We were almost certain to catch all kinds of deep sea wonders, from pinfish to eels. Although not much in the way of food on the table, it was some mighty fine adventure and we became quite a hit with the neighborhood cats.

I guess one of the key ingredients in this particular formula for success was the fact that we were on a dock, which consequently, was attached to dry land. Dissecting my problem, one reoccurring element is the inclusion of boats, moving boats, moving boats out on the high - and then low - and then high - and then low - seas. In other words, the kind of seas that make your golden tan disappear into a ghastly green and make your inner being threaten to abandon you, leaving you and the rest of your self to suffer through this self-induced torture.

But before I continue along this particular tangent, I do recall one fishing trip that was not sabotaged by nature's very own carnival tide. Matter of fact, I guess that I am the only one that can lay claim to this next jewel that I am getting ready to lay on you.

Let me set the stage. It's a beautiful day and my lovely wife and I had been invited to go out fishing with another wonderful couple, Danny and Angie Varner. At the time, it seemed insignificant that Danny had entered his boat into a king mackerel fishing tournament, so we were all of high spirits when we proceeded out of the channel. Well, let's say we tried to head out of the channel.

As we made our way to the inlet, to the surprise of all, a rubber-covered head popped up, quickly followed by another. After we had overcome our initial shock, we motored over to the pair and asked if we could lend any assistance. Safely on board, the spokesperson of the two explained that she was a diving instructor and that her pupil had run out of air, forcing the two to surface in the busy thoroughfare. Well, being the good Samaritans

that we are, we turned around and carried the two back to their equipment on shore. Fishing trip take two.

On our second attempt, we actually made it outside of the inlet before playing rescue 911. This time it was a boatload, and I do mean BOATLOAD, of American's finest. There were at least eight servicemen in a 16-foot boat which had attached to its stern a motor that looked like it might have gone through World War II. They had run into some motor problems (surprise, surprise) and need a two in. (You guessed it, "Good Samaritans to the rescue!")

You would think that with all of our acts of kindness that surely some good fortune would come our way that day. Well, thanks to yours truly, that was not to be. When we finally got around to fishing, Danny being the competent captain he is, directed us to a strike, a big strike. There it was, its silvery side flashing barely below the surface of the water next to the boat. "Get the gaff!" shouted Danny, which I did. "Gaff him!" shouted Danny, which I did. Again, and again, but no matter how many time I hit that stupid fish, the gaff would not go in.

Was it my fault that no one had bothered to tell me that the gaff had a clear plastic cover on the hook? I have to admit though, Danny was a good sport about it all. The water wasn't that cold when he threw me in and he only made me swim a few hundred yards before he turned around and came back for me.

Another notable fishing expedition came in the line of duty when I was called on to cover a fishing tournament while working in the field of sports journalism. The day started in the dark, cold hours of predawn, not a good sign for this "a day doesn't begin before 7" kind of a guy. But nevertheless, there I was, standing on the Morehead City waterfront listening to weathered salty dogs talking about the fact that it was going to be a rough one.

Once aboard, with the wonderful fragrance of diesel fuel in the air, I made small talk with the other fishermen, (who incidentally had about as much experience as I did). Most were representatives of the various tournament sponsors and knew about what I did before my cane pole days. One bright spot was the discovery of neatly packed lunches, which consisted of sandwiches, fried chicken and all kinds of other delectable goodies.

Not wanting to appear greedy, I decided to wait for the others before diving into my box. As I waited, I watched the other boats in the horizon roll in and out of sight. Up and down, up and down, it seemed that the swells were swallowing up all foolish enough to be out there in the first place. As the clock inched slowly forward in time, everyone became more and more restless because of the lack of fish. Zilcho. Not a bite.

During this time period, I found myself feeling increasingly strange. I had never experienced seasickness before, so really didn't know what was happening to me. All I knew is that suddenly I was drying. As I rushed to the head (hey, I'm not totally

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It is with great pleasure and appreciation that **The Mailboat** welcomes these individuals to our growing list of **Mailboat Partners**. Our thanks also to countless others who have sent "a little extra just to help." Many times that "little extra" made all the difference. Through their willingness to be a part of the financial support of **The Mailboat's** early stages, this publication will have the opportunity to establish itself as an important part of the preservation of our local history.

We welcome others to join the **Partnership**. **The Mailboat** belongs to all of us ... it is **OUR** story. Together we can keep **The Mailboat** growing for years to come. We cannot do it alone. Your interest and enthusiasm with what we have brought together in the first few issues encourages us to "keep digging" ... There is so much that needs to be included! Thank you for helping us "get it into print." We look forward to many years of working together as **partners**.

(To become a Mailboat Partner, see p.



"The Mailboat" represents a network of writers, historians, teachers, collectors, folklorists, artists, crafters, and preservationists who are keenly interested in the cultural heritage of North Carolina's coast. Its purpose is to record and share the unique character of this area, its people, and its maritime history and traditions. Together we hope to establish a resource for anyone seeking to learn more about the distinct culture of Carolina's coastal region.

"The Mailboat," will provide a means of exchange for all whose interest in this area reaches not only to the past, but also is concerned about the future of this changing lifestyle. It will include reviews from local books, features from contributing writers and students, a calendar of cultural events, and information on preservation efforts within the communities of Carolina's coast. A subscription will also include a 10% discount on all purchases from Coastlore's catalog of books, prints, and collectibles.

Join us as we strive to keep the real beauty of coastal Carolina alive. It is our belief that those who genuinely care about the coast of North Carolina—the people, their lifestyles, the environment—can preserve and protect this culture from the changes taking place. We can hold on to the things that make Carolina's coast a uniquely beautiful place. May all of us—natives, newcomers, residents, and visitors—share with one another our love for this truly special place.

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Vol I (1990-1991) \$10.00

Vol. II (1991-1992) \$14.00

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